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APT*:
Misreading gives the correct answer

Anneli Porri

You probably know the duck-rabbit picture through which Ernst Gombrich described the necessary ambivalence of art and how the viewer's perception functioned. Gombrich claimed that we cannot see the image apart from its interpretation, and that we cannot see two images at the same time, i.e. we see either a duck or a rabbit, but not both simultaneously. On the basis of ambivalence, Taavi Talve and Dénes Farkas easily overturn the simultaneity claim: *Footnotes* 2 is a work where the simultaneity of the interpretation of images and signs in viewers' consciousness leads to misreading the word, and erroneous reading leads to the philosophically correct answer.

Taavi and Dénes displayed their installation *Footnotes* 2 in the Draakoni gallery in Tallinn, a rather compact exhibition space with a big Jugendstil window and patterned floor right across the road from the Russian embassy. The white sculptural and massive letters APT, in Helvetica typeface, were not placed on the floor as representatives of democratic sculpture, but were instead placed on a veneer podium resembling scaffolding or a work desk. The asterisk at the end of the word hung from the ceiling and a text in Russian behind it on the wall imitated the footnote comment: "All the letters in this word are familiar to me, but the meaning still remains unclear. It is not in the dictionary."

Dénes Farkas & Taavi Talve. *Joonealused (Footnotes)*. Monumental Gallery, Tartu Art House. 19 August–11 September 2011

The white letters in a white gallery cube seem simultaneously declarative and slogan-like, as well as extremely delicate and non-material, although it is still the language which establishes the rhetoric of the power of minimalism. How do the artists behave, and are they helping the viewer in any way? Even in the traditional paratextual paragraphs that supplement the exhibition, the artists remain as curt as possible. They also extend the atmosphere of the display into the emailed press release, repeating the footnote's text on the wall, the footnote's definition and its graphological formatting.

Taavi Talve and Dénes Fakas place anyone wishing to talk about *Footnotes* in a difficult situation, because the art criticism narrative is temporal and consists of sentences and references, but the work of Dénes and Taavi is a whole that stands still in time and in the viewer's gaze. All meanings and meaningful associations are simultaneously open and important, so that this work cannot be described as a sequence of thoughts or associations, where the next develops from the previous. No, all thoughts are there at the same time. As a viewer I feel that I am fully subjected to the footnote's form, which also contains simultaneous information. The word to which the footnote explanation is added does not actually lead to the explanation, but at that moment the word itself has the meaning indicated in the footnote; except, the reader does not (yet) know it. Reading the text with footnotes also means constantly returning to the main text; after a brief break from the text's narrative, we carry on, as if there had not been any disruption, but now we are a bit more informed, instructed, perhaps even enough to really understand the discursively corrected text.

The series *Footnotes* inevitably, directly and physically brings us to the concept of cultural space. This work only addresses the viewer who possesses the bilingual or two-mode reading skills of the transition era; a viewer whose cultural memory includes both Soviet and contemporary Western codes of language and art. First, we need to know Russian – if not enough to read the footnote on the wall, then we should certainly be able to read the alphabet. At the same time, the viewer needs some knowledge of the English language, at least to understand the word 'art'. The form and aesthetics of the work also originate in two places: the first link is inside art and regards

the installation as an example of classical Western minimalism and conceptualism, which we know from art museums and art history reproductions. At the same time, with minimalism and conceptualism, the Soviet Union used similar forms and aesthetics outside art halls, in monumental propaganda, writing various ideological slogans on roofs and friezes, and it marked city borders with such sculptural signs.

The viewer can enjoy the exhibition even more if he is aware of what Dénes Farkas and Taavi Talve have achieved individually. The characteristic interests of both artists, their handwriting and methods, have deliciously blended in the new joint project. The latter contains Dénes's recognisable white interior and architectural models made for his photographic performances and his passion for various linguistic and translation issues. The project also clearly shows Taavi's background as a sculptor, his experience of ideological discursive speech and of analysing different

Dénes Farkas & Taavi Talve. *Footnotes 2*. Draakoni Gallery, Tallinn. 31 October–12 November 2011

(analogue and digital) methods of conveying information. The viewer might also notice that the letter combination APT is simultaneously a new independent work, as well as part of the exhibition *Joonealused* (*Footnotes*), which took place in Tartu and presented the word TAPTY, i.e. the name of the town in the Cyrillic alphabet.

Finally, I would like to describe the 'duck-rabbit' effect of Dénes and Taavi's work and show where Gombrich made a mistake. With the first glance at the sculpture, the viewer immediately pronounces in his mind the word 'art' and understands it. At the next, more thorough look, comes the 'tongue-in-cheek' realisation that 'art' is written in Cyrillic, the Latin 'P' is the Russian 'R'. The brain or past experience chooses a more logical pronunciation instead of the nonsense-word 'apt', at the same time mixing up the experience of the two 'first foreign languages'. The context – the Russian footnote on the wall and the Russian embassy across the road – certainly encourages the viewer to read the middle letter of the word in Cyrillic. However, a chat with art students who were born in the early 1990s and thus have no overwhelming experience of the Russian language, confirmed that, in their case, such association did not arise. No illusion emerged. I thus think that *Footnotes* 2 produces simultaneous illusions, and does not demand an alternative switch from one code to another.

The semiotic language and reception game is finished off with the wall text, which – if understood – does not allow any dispute. Indeed, all of the letters of this word are familiar to me and the word cannot be found in Estonian, English or Russian dictionaries. The only thing to be argued about is the comprehensibility of meaning, but there actually is no argument, as we have to agree with the views of many authors that if art or an artistic text is fully comprehensible, it would lose its point. After all, the sense and meaning of art cannot be found in a dictionary either.

Anneli Porri
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Generation of the the Place: Image, Memory and Fiction in the Baltics. Group exhibition of Baltic photography, Tallinn Art Hall, October-November 2011

A Month of Photography, without going Beyond

Ats Parve

See also at www.fotokuu.ee/en/koguprogramm/

The symbol of the Tallinn Month of Photography presents a photographic studio where, unusually, lighting equipment lights itself. As the flashes are also directed at the camera, the shaft of light from the studio illuminates both the photographer and the viewer. Light thus brings all parties into the same room and the forum can start. It should be kept in mind here that the movement of light, i.e. information, is controlled – no shared bit of information is random. Despite the seemingly burdensome task, linked with debuting, of gathering in one room the history of photography and the new world order, the Tallinn Month of Photography as festival of lens-based art *Natural Magic*, headed by Marge Monko, aspired to much more than just an introduction.

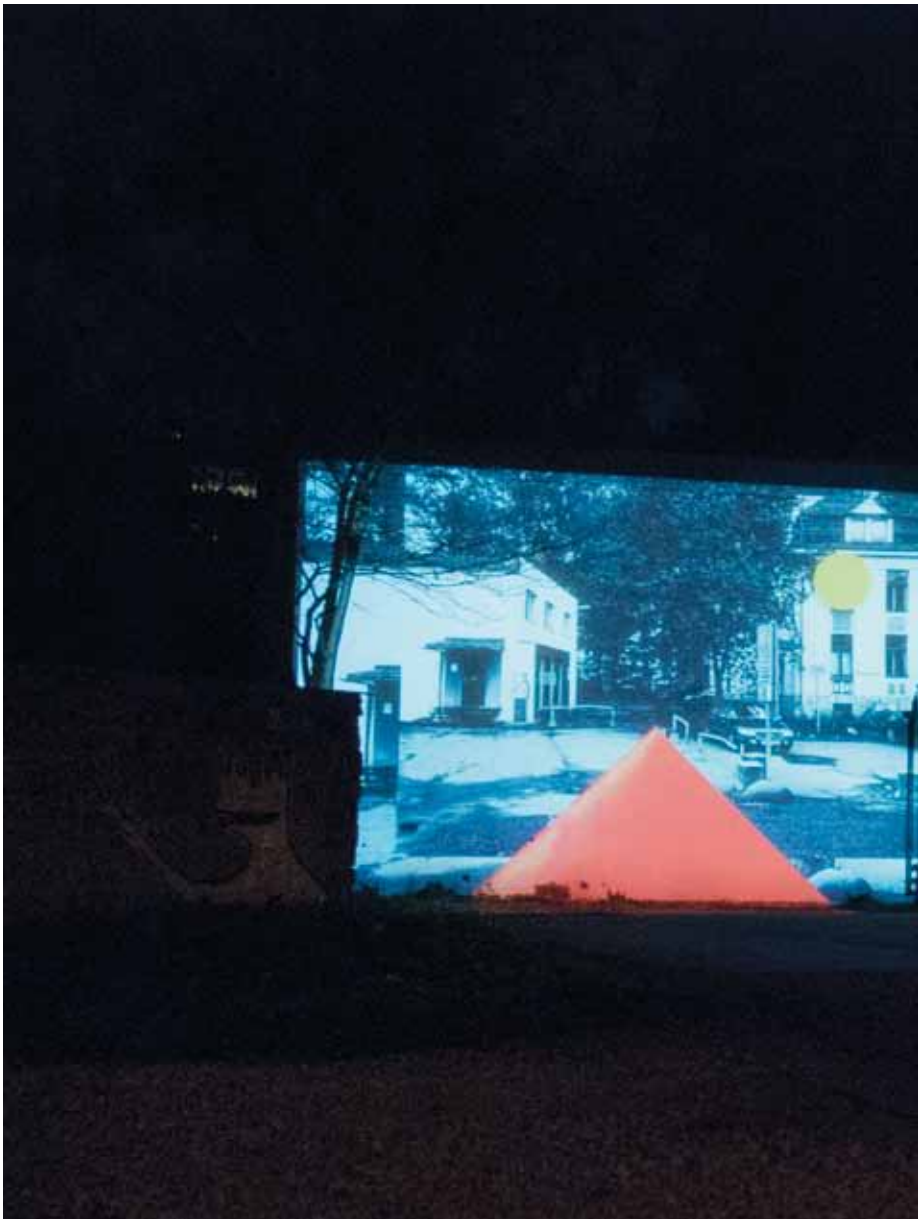
The month was organized because of a wish and need to enliven local camera art. The background to such aspirations includes the founding of the Estonian Union of Photographers, the Union of Photography Artists and the Estonian Association of Press Photographers[1], and Tõnis Liibek's PhD thesis on 19th century Estonian photography culture[2]. The exhibition of Baltic photography, curated by Vytautas Michelkevičius,[3] attempted to map the world-views of artists born in the 1970s–1980s. The exhibition was a psychoanalysis of a generation and emphasised, besides the heightened sensitivity towards the surrounding space, the artists' incredibly even aesthetic vision of photography. The fine art prints in decent frames and under glass on the white walls of the Art Hall seemed to surrender to the time and context into which they had been introduced, thus making the present problematic, as well as dissecting the past. The shared vision of a 'correct' or 'neutral' manner of display, where the suitability of a work's essence is regarded as second-rate, speaks primarily of the artists' insecurities in today's art landscape.

Captured in a Blink. Estonian Photography 1850–1912. Estonian History Museum, Great Guild Hall, October 2011–March 2012

Despite the news that even Tate Modern is still trying to justify photography as art[4], we can claim that all stages tackled by photography's cultural history have indeed taken place. Certain truths naturally need time to settle, but this cannot be at the expense of new questions raised daily by photography. Due to constantly shifting horizons, the topics of contemporary photography exhibitions, festivals and biennials often deal with crossing boundaries (*Crossing Boundaries*, 5th Triennial of Photography. Hamburg, 2011) or abolishing them altogether (*Out of Life / Out of Mind / Out of Space*, Fotofestiwal, Lodz, 2011). Thus the Photography Month's *Natural Magic*, borrowed from G. B. della Porta, looks at this pulsating and shimmering landscape with a self-assured, but admiring glance.

Many events in the festival programme formulated their aims in the title. The installations of the Experimental Gallery in the Freedom Square tunnel focused on the mechanisms of how images emerge. Reimo Võsa-Tangsoo's photo kiosk described the structural links between photo and sound, requiring the viewer to follow instructions. On the other hand, Alis Mäesalu and Anu Lilp's installation *Surveillance* on the tunnel wall paradoxically ignited when you quickly walked past it. This was the festival's only work that criticised the controlled urban space, which can be explained by its perception of collective inevitability. The developments of the surveillance society, which today culminate in voluntarily publicising the private, have directed artists who have been dealing with the cctv-terror into the back rooms of social media and other phenomena seemingly only constituting the personal space.

Helen Melesk and Hello Upan[5] also tackled the public-private issue. They curated a series of apartment-exhibitions which provided Tõnu Tunnel, Krõõt Tarkmeel, Laura Toots, Reio Aare and the group Tiit Sokk[6] with abandoned spaces in central Tallinn and on its borders. The exhibitions were born within a week and brought the previously unseen spaces to viewers and to new life, being memorable merely by differentiating from the cold mist of white cubes. Krõõt Tarkmeel's portraits of friends and Laura Toots's dissection of the family album examined the importance of photographic images and their ambivalent nature in creating our memories. The entire apartment-exhibition project, however, raised the issue of how many unfinished thoughts



A Place That Changed My Life. Photoprojection by Anu Vahtra *Untitled (a line has two sides aka any of the twenty-four triangles)*, Estonia pst 15A, Tallinn, 14 October 2011

Whispering Spaces. Apartment exhibition by Tiit Sokk, Vana-Posti 2/Harju 3, Tallinn, October 2011

Whispering Spaces. Apartment exhibition by Laura Toots, Kalevi 18-21, Tallinn, October 2011

brought away from the gallery never culminate because they began in a space and form which lacked any contact with the mundane.

The last deconstructivist move regarding the camera art's usual presentation was made by Epp Kubu. A series of photo-projections by the multi-disciplinary artist introduced immensely different artists to the Tallinn public space. Arne Maasik, Reginleif Trubetsky, Jaan Klõšeiko, Ly Lestberg and Anu Vahtra had the opportunity to perform anywhere in the urban space[7]. As a result, the projections turned up in places the specifics of which made it easy to guess the names of the artists. The most impressive transition of public space into a manifestation of personal (mental) space took place in the one-hundred-

year-old house in Tatari Street designed by Burman. Reginleif Trubetsky invited viewers to her flat, drowned in blue, where the artist's fantasies came into contact with reality through the camera. After the first successful attempts at recording memory pictures[8], you have to view such surrealist spatial experiences as albums of the Milky Way galaxy despatched from aboard the Hubble. As all kinds of spaces of the physical world have been discovered by means of photography, art and science increasingly spend more resources to record the invisible.

In order to determine the ability and inability of contemporary photography, it is often researched via other media, using typically photographic concepts, such as 'stops', 'repetition' and 'illumination'. Switching them into other practices, however, it must be noted how much the end result actually refers to photography, and how much to the media or means which try to explain it. Projection can be seen as separating the image from paper and losing the photo's status as an object. Although the image of a picture carried by a shaft of light first appears in a cinema hall, we cannot say that the projection essentially belongs to a static or a moving picture. The festival of photofilm invented by Anna Hints and Alis Mäesalu, and the fact that it was brought to cinema screen, raised more questions about the differences between moving and still shots. The gaps between the images actually turned out to be more significant than the shots and the frequency of shots.

As the experiments are always in danger of losing touch with the starting point, references to history are not just advisable, but crucial. The exhibition of Estonian photography curated by Tõnis Liibek and Merilis Roosalu, from the first photos to the birth of film art,[9] recalled the initial tasks of the medium and took the viewer back to the studio, to ask for the mirror image fixed by himself. The main programme's small but strong link between the 'new' and 'old' photography, and – perhaps more importantly – between the previous and the current generations, was embodied by Jaan Klõšeiko. His projection in Hirve Park, which functioned as a time portal and photographic exhibition in the Vabaduse Gallery, influenced viewers on both sides of photographic art. It is clear that Klõšeiko uses his grey hair only as camouflage in order to access exhibition spaces that need to be turned upside down.

Jaan Klõšeiko (on the right) at his solo exhibition *Freedom Square* in Vabaduse Gallery, Tallinn, October 2011

A Place That Changed My Life. Photoprojection by Reginleif Trubetsky *Sinis*, Tatari 21B, Tallinn, 13 October 2011

Although, since photography's birth, the developments of photography have preserved a tension in the social and art fields, we can say that the first Month of Photography took place at a very interesting time. The precise mechanism of ordinary cameras (or everybody's potential in recording a quality image) and the process of pictures getting bigger than the album photograph[10] are dispelling the magic aura that used to surround photographic images. On the other hand, various research projects involved in memory pictures cause another type of anxiety. Drawing comprehensive conclusions in the history of photography is still far away. Instead of regretting the developments disrupted by occupations, the slim history book of local photography can be seen as an anchor which is easy to haul aboard in order to move on. The experimentalism and courage that the Month of Photography reached at the first stage rehearsal may one day lead to a performance which people come to see from different corners of the world, especially from where the most energy is still spent on justifying photography as art.

1 The Estonian Union of Photographers was founded in 2004, the Union of Photography Artists in 2007 and the Estonian Association of Press Photographers in 2010

2 Tõnis Liibek, Photography culture in Estonia 1839–1895. Tallinn University, 2010

3 Group exhibition *Generation of the Place: Image, Memory and Fiction in the Baltics.* Curator: Vytautas Michelkevičius. Artists: Arnis Balčus, Ugnius Gelguda, Marge Monko, Krista Mölder, Robertas Narkus and Milda Zabarauskaitė, Kaspars Podnieks, Rimas Sakalauskas, Tadas Sarunas and Sigrid Viir. Tallinn Art Hall, 08.10.–21.11.2011

4 Sean O'Hagan, Britain's photographic revolution. *The Observer*, 30.10.2011. http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2011/oct/30/v-a-photographs-gallery-tate?INTCMP=ILCNETTXT3487 (10.01.2012)

5 The undertaking can be seen as a continuation of the two curators' 2010 project *To the Roofs*

6 Ulvi Tiit and Marili Sokk

7 There were also difficulties in reaching the 'freely chosen place' – the city council did not allow Arne Maasik's projection on the screens in Freedom Square. The artist presented his projection at the other end of the square, on the covered windows of the Art Hall.

8 Yasmin Anwar, Scientists use brain imaging to reveal the movies in our mind. UC Berkeley News Center, 22.09.2011. http://newscenter.berkeley.edu/2011/09/22/brain-movies/ (10.01.2012)

9 *Silmapilkline Ülessewõte. Eesti foto 1850–1912.* Curators: Tõnis Liibek and Merilis Roosalu. Estonian History Museum, Great Guild, 08.10.2011–14.03.2012

10 Comparison of tablet computer screen with 10 x 15 photograph.

Ats Parve

(1987), graduated from the Photography Department of the Tallinn Polytechnic School and is currently studying photography at the Estonian Academy of Arts. His first public performances include *camera obscura* brought into public spaces (2010, 2011) and exhibitions of Estonian contemporary cultural posters in Tallinn and Helsinki.

Beyond with Agamben and without Agamben

Ragne Nukk

BEYOND, Dénes Farkas

BEYOND, Alexandre Singh

The Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben's short essay *The Last Judgement* (2005) served as the ideological viewpoint to the international exhibition *Beyond* [curated by Adam Budak – Ed] at the Tallinn Month of Photography at Kumu Art Museum. Agamben has a very particular take on photography, that does not necessarily embrace the whole exhibition, but analysing his ideas with a few other theorists might help to broaden his scale.

Proust and photography

'Look at my face: my name is Might Have Been; I am also called No More, Too Late, Farewell'. This is how the introductory text to the contemporary photography exhibition *Beyond* begins. It is poetic and a bit sentimental. This was the dedication that Edgar Auber allegedly wrote on his photo portrait that he gave to Marcel Proust in 1891. Photography was Proust's idée fixe. When the press asked for Proust's portrait photo, he always sent a few or had new ones taken. When he received visitors, the famous writer always found a reason to show them his photography collection.

There are probably few people who knew Auber's name well. Marcel Proust, who enthusiastically collected portrait pictures of his nearest and dearest, with dedications, met the young Swiss diplomat in the early 1890s. Proust became very fond of Auber and, when the latter died after they had known each other for one year, Proust mourned him for a long time. He repeated Auber's dedication in several of his letters and it remained one of his guiding principles for life. Proust thought dedications had great power to influence reality and he saw a shocking power in Auber's dedication, which seemed to foretell the young man's death.

BEYOND, Annette Kelm

It is important to remember here that Proust's keenness for photography occurred at the end of the 19th century and in the early 20th century, an era that witnessed turbulent developments in photography: from widespread photographic studios to the first mass-produced hand-held cameras. As a relatively new medium, photography still evoked great

respect and even a sense of mystery at the beginning of the new century.

Giorgio Agamben's interpretation

One hundred years later, in his essay *The Last Judgement*, Giorgio Agamben replaced the mysticism of photographs with religiosity. Like Proust, who thought photographs and their dedications were extremely important, almost like omens, Agamben too writes in his essay that through the lens the most banal gestures in human life become essential on Judgement Day. A movement captured by the camera contains the whole meaning of human existence. This could easily be Agamben's way of demonstrating the power of Image over Word: on Judgement Day, the angels in the heavenly court do not open a man's register of sins in written form; rather, judgement is passed on the basis of pictures.

Agamben talks about photographs that document and claim to depict the real world. However, the majority of displayed works in *Beyond* manipulate through photography as a medium or through the viewers' senses. Interpretive photography is no longer a two-dimensional surface, but escapes the classical boundaries, to the other side, beyond: surprising and startling, enchanting and disturbing, moving away from facts and spilling into physical space. The works, which surpass the borders of photography, do not have any pretentions to a truth outside themselves, only claiming their own truth. They are linked to the material world only by a narrow umbilical cord and the cord is the bridge, according to Agamben, the 'supreme abyss', which provides today's photography with its ambivalence, its amphibian state – existing between the two worlds with a chance to take an occasional look at the 'other side'.

Nancy and the sacred nature of images

Agamben's collection of essays which contains *The Last Judgement* appeared first in Italian in 2005. Besides his short essay, it makes sense to read the texts by the French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy on how images function in our world. Nancy is not quite as religion-based as Agamben, but a parallel reading of these authors makes it possible to interpret Agamben's brief ideas about photography without a mystical-religious background. With Nancy, we should bear in mind that his theory of pictorial culture is strongly influenced by Maurice Blanchot. According to

BEYOND, Stefan Burger

Nancy, image not only belongs to visual culture, but it can also be musical, poetic, tactile, kinesthetic etc. He does not talk specifically about photography, although his theory can easily be employed in analysing photography.

Nancy begins his essay *L'image—le distinct* (1999) with the words 'Image is sacred…', but hastens to explain that his 'sacred' is not religious. An image is sacred, i.e. standing apart, distanced, not belonging to this world. Something sacred is something that cannot be touched and it is not possible to establish connections with it. Moving away from the term's religious connotation, Nancy calls the 'sacred' 'distinct' (*le distinct*). What is 'distinct' is distant, the opposite of closeness. Nancy continues that the distant can be divided into two parts: it is either separated from contact, not tactile, or it is separated from identity, which means that it is different. An image is an object that is no longer the same object. An image distinguishes itself from the object.

Agamben explains how photography gives an individual gesture the weight of a whole life. Maurice Blanchot asks whether reflection was not in fact always more spiritual than the reflected object. And Nancy talks about images as something 'sacred', i.e. something distinct, far from the world of objects, which is characterised by availability. All three views place photography, or image in its broadest sense, somewhere else, 'beyond', although that other side does not have to be transcendental in its religious or mystical sense (Agamben, of course, clearly prefers the religious approach).

Return of the dearly departed and eliminating the marked

The third philosopher tackled here, Maurice Blanchot, writes that the image usually comes after the object. 'After' means that the object must move aside in order to become graspable again. The object reappears as something that is lost. An object that will never truly come back returns as an image. Similarly, Agamben also talks about photography as something that makes the lost reality possible again.

Works that make use of various found objects and photographs can be viewed as the return of the dearly departed. The American artist Marlo Pascual, for example, gathers her material from second-hand shops and flea-markets. The Turkish artist Banu Cennetoglu uses newspaper cuttings of rebus sections. The slides of the Cyprus-born Christodoulos Panayiotou come from the archive of his native town. Haris Epaminonda, also from Cyprus, frames yellowing reproductions from old magazines.

Blanchot removes from the image its most characteristic feature: the image signifies something and has a meaning. According to the artist, an image does not in the least help us to understand the object itself, but instead distances the object from its meaning, keeping it in a state of immobile similarity, which has nothing to be similar with, as it marks something that is no more. On the one hand, this idea is also valid for found photographs, but it can equally well be employed in a procedure where the artist has hijacked the object and removed all indexicality from it.

An excellent example here is the work of the German artist Annette Kelm. She depicts the most mundane objects, providing them with an alienating aspect. According to Nancy, we could replace the notion 'alienating', often used to describe Kelm's work, with 'distinct'. Following the logic of commercial photographs, Kelm lifts objects to 'sacred' status, preventing the viewer from establishing emotional links with the objects, as they are separated from the context and functionality, and

all traces of a reference system are removed as well.

The photographs are decorative until the moment the viewer's logic receives a blow: the lamp-series (*Anonymous, Lilac Clock Bag Buffalo Exchange*, 2007) depicts a lamp falling sideways, but the process of falling is disrupted at various stages, causing a subconscious confusion with the general logic of our world. Kelm also repeats this 'something-is-wrong' feeling in her flower vase work (*Untitled*, 2011). The initially faultlessly formulated photograph gradually begins to reveal an intentionally unfinished formulation: the flowers in the vase are withered and the water has turned yellowish, the background is a fabric with traces of folding and torn edges.

Blanchot and image as a dead body

Becky Beasley from Great Britain has been working with Blanchot's theory for some time. According to Blanchot, what marks something that is no more is a cadaver – a dead body seems to mark a human being that once was, but at the same time was not. He has compared images with dead bodies and reveals the relevant paradox: a dead body is not a living person, nor is it the same person who was alive, or anyone else. A dead body is simultaneously here and nowhere. Paraphrasing Agamben, a photograph constitutes a supreme abyss between this world and 'beyond', although it does not fully belong there or here, but combines something of both.

Beasley's work is characterised by its links to literature. *Literary Green* (2009), an installation of two photographs and a glass table on steel legs, is derived from Herman Melville's 1853 short story *Bartleby, the Scrivener.* In the story, Bartleby works at a solicitor's office where he has to copy legal documents, but gradually he refuses to do any work, or even make a single movement, until starving to death.

Beasley examines Blanchot's notion of the cadaver as a lack of something, as the dead body marks something that no longer exists. The artist tries to re-perform 'lacking' – Bartleby's boss wants to conceal the employee with a wall, move him away, and Bartleby himself degenerates into a state of deep idleness, losing all typical features of life. He becomes a black hole, which seemingly exists here and now, but is no longer the same person or in fact any person.

Agamben would love Lecomte

Finally, leaving aside both Nancy and Blanchot, we should take a look at an artist whose work, among others presented at the exhibition, probably best suits the ideas in Agamben's essay. Tatiana Lecomte, a French artist residing in Vienna, has two works displayed: *Leni* (2010) and *Cadaver Obedience 1* (2010). The first shows the German propaganda-film director, and Adolf Hitler's close friend, Leni Riefenstahl feeding African children. In the other, a Wehrmacht soldier demonstrates to his subordinate how to salute properly. Both of Lecomte's works are similar in form and imitate the sequence of film shots. She has enlarged various details on found photographs and arranged the results in a film-like sequence. The work tries to create a sense of movement on an essentially static surface.

An image imprisons a gesture's dynamics, as Agamben wrote. Inspired by Gilles Deleuze, Agamben developed a theory of 'gestural cinema', where the element of film is gesture, not image. Agamben reduces the image to a set of gestures. Film is able to make the static image move again and turn it back into a gesture. Lecomte seems to attempt to liberate the gesture recorded in a photo by means of photography itself, thus creating an illusory dynamics. Lecomte's photographs refer to specific historical eras or people, and make them again forgotten, albeit for a brief time. These works, almost in the purest way, embody Agamben's idea of the importance and weight of a gesture recorded by photography on the 'Last Day of Judgement' – the master of Hitler's propaganda films is then evaluated on the basis of her kindness to the starving African children, and the Wehrmacht soldier is redeemed thanks to his obedient behaviour.

This article was written for the *Kunst.ee* magazine.

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BEYOND, Tatiana Lecomte

FLASHBACK: *BEYOND,* TALLINN MONTH OF PHOTOGRAPHY

7 October 2011–8 January 2012
Great Hall at Kumu Art Museum
Curator: Adam Budak.
Artists: Helena Almeida, John Baldessari, Becky Beasely, Stefan Burger, Miriam Böhm, Banu Cennetoglu, Sunah Choi, Haris Epaminonda, Geoffrey Farmer, John Gerrard, Jack Goldstein, Caroline Heider, Annette Kelm, Elad Lassry, Tatiana Lecomte, Christodoulos Panayiotou, Marlo Pascual, Alexandre Singh and Dénes Farkas.

See also at
www.fotokuu.ee/en/programm/teisele-poole/


U.S. MILITARY OUT OF
ANYWHERE

Occupy Wall Street

Tarmo Jüristo

Last year marked two decades of the restoration of Estonian independence, and many public speeches, and the media in general, frequently used the metaphor 'coming of age'. Even President Toomas Hendrik Ilves mentioned this in his New Year's speech. Now that Estonia has grown up, the President has called for balance, common sense and confidence.

The expression 'coming of age', however, has another side to it.

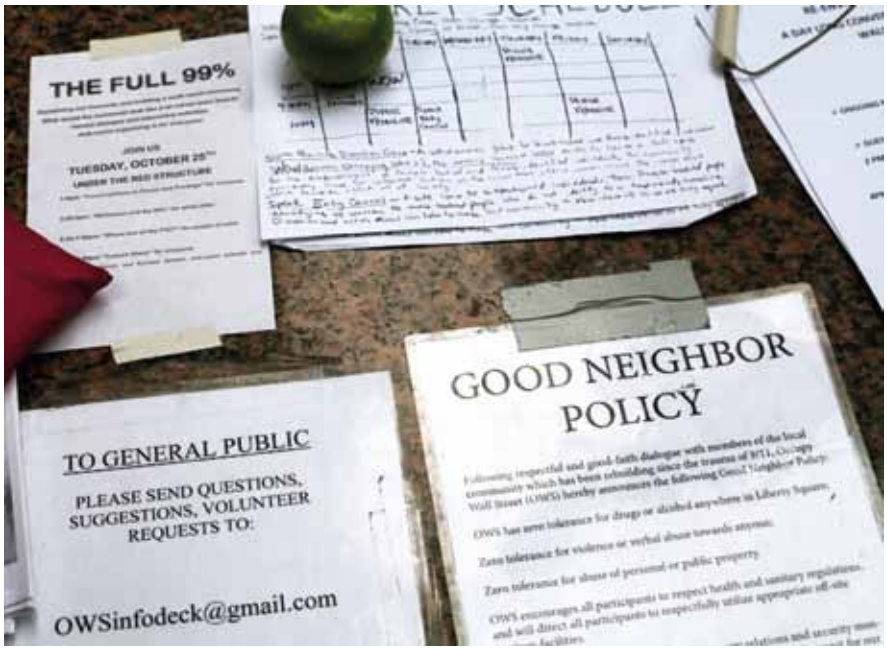
It seems that, in the course of becoming an adult state and society, Estonia has proudly abandoned a feature often associated with the teenage years, i.e. idealism. Idealism, the hallmark of Estonia's 19th century awakening period, the War of Independence and the Singing Revolution, is still respected – and often directly romanticised – in its historical context. Today, on the other hand, it almost seems like something misguided, something containing a kind of immaturity that we like to reproach the Greeks with. 'Adult Estonia' has lost its power, and perhaps its ability, to dream.

Estonian people, of course, still have their dreams in 2012. Dreams of a better life, a job, education, happiness and success. Still, these dreams are of mature people, sensible and restrained: they rely on our possibilities and not on our wishes. And even if they are ambitious – such as Prime Minister Ansip's pre-crisis dream of Estonia ranking among the five wealthiest countries in Europe – their difference from the present circumstances is purely quantitative.

The big social dream at the end of the 1980s of economic autonomy and our own money became known under the apt name IME [Isemajandav Eesti – self-managing Estonia; the idea stipulated that the Estonian economy no longer depended on the Soviet economic system; the abbreviation IME means 'miracle' in Estonian – Ed]. As we now know, this was just a start. What followed was even more miraculous than a dream of a self-managing Estonia. It was something that was ungraspable by the mundane imagination. It was a dream that differed from the daily life and could not be expressed in terms of addition or subtraction.

In that sense, today's Estonia lives in that distant dream, the fulfilment of which twenty years ago required belief in unlimited idealism. Or rather – this dream would never have come true without that kind of unlimited idealism, which made people link hands in a human chain from Tallinn to Vilnius, hoping that this might lead them to freedom. The Baltic Chain and the Night Song Festivals of course did not actually make us free. People standing in the chain or waving flags on the Song Festival Grounds behaved as if they were already free, and thus the 20 August declaration of the Supreme Soviet was merely a stating of a fact.

Strangely enough, twenty years later the situation seems to be a mirror image of the previous one. We are all free, and maybe for that very reason we do not have any special



reason to behave as free people. Our freedom is passive, something we know we have, without bothering to think about how precisely it is expressed, what it means or what it requires from us. As adults, we are used to the idea that freedom exists. We feel that people are free in the same way that they are blonde or tall.

Jacques Ranciére once emphasised that politics means expanding borders in the field understood as 'political', whereas in recent years in Estonia the 'political' field of meaning has been narrowing. When Siim Kallas, Tiit Made and Edgar Savisaar suggested the idea of a self-managing Estonia in 1987, it was certainly a political step. Today, on the other hand, we are told that economics is something outside the political sphere. Moreover, it should not be 'politicised' with open debates about today's situation or future prospects. Calls for clear borders of 'pure politics' can be seen in other areas as well, for example in education and art. Teachers and artists have been repeatedly told to keep to their own fields and have been accused of meddling in politics. This has happened a few times, e.g. the production of *Unified Estonia* [a social-political project of Theatre *NO99*, which established a fictitious political party, held a convention and was taken for a real political power by many – Ed], or the project of the Golden Soldier [Kristina Norman's project, see also *Estonian Art 1/2009* – Ed]. In cases like these, it is easy to assume that art tackling political topics should also accept the essential functions of politics and offer solutions.

Of course, if art sets itself the task of solving society's problems, it should not be done in exhibition halls or theatres, but in the parliament. Art should be seen – referring to Jacques Ranciére again – as a form expressing political imagination. This is a viewpoint with a long history in European culture, going back at least to the early 20th century Italian Futurism, and perhaps most evident in the European Situationist movements in the 1960s.

The problem of the fading political imagination, and the subsequent narrowing of 'political' borders, is naturally not typical of only Estonia. Instead, the Estonian case stands out because this is not seen as a problem at all. Foreign news about democratic people's movements in Greece, Spain, Italy, Egypt and the United States evoke suspicion and a sense of superiority here, rather than sympathy or curiosity. It is thus difficult to believe that Guy Debord or Raoul Vaneigem could ever become household names in Estonia.

It seems that today's Estonia has a long way to go to reach a point where movements such as Occupy Wall Street can be seen as political and not just issues of public order. An undertaking such as *Let's Do It!*, where volunteers gathered to clean up the country, *My Estonia* brainstorming sessions or the activities of the *New World Society* [all civic initiatives – Ed] are not seen today as belonging in the field of politics. In order to change the situation, people must revise their understanding of what 'political' actually means. This understanding does not depend on abstract knowledge, but on courage and the ability to dream: the courage and ability not to become and remain adults.

The biggest challenge to Estonian art might well lie here: to give people back their imagination, which we as a society lost when we 'came of age'.

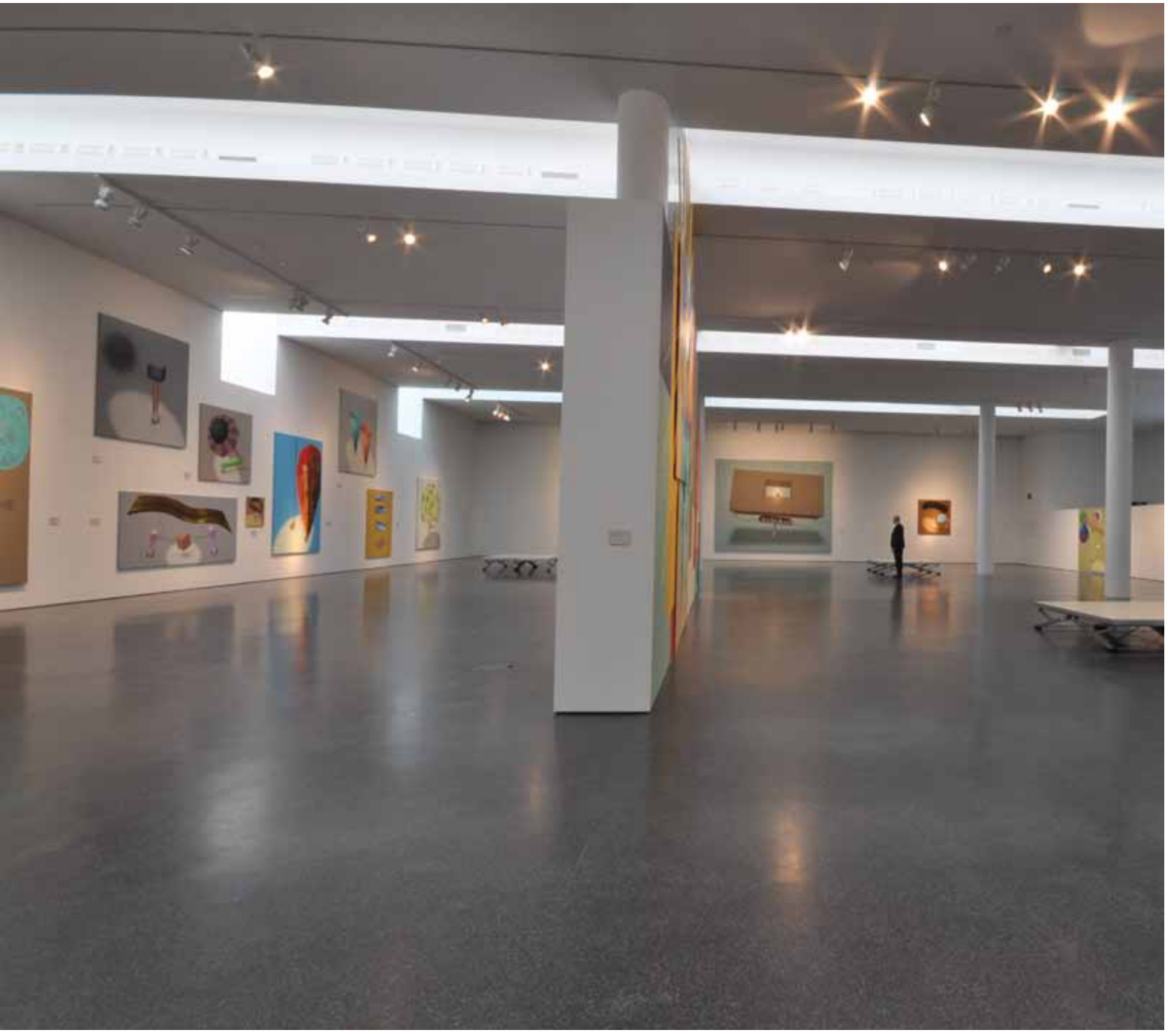
Tarmo Jüristo (1971), is a doctoral candidate at Tallinn University, in the department of Cultural Studies. His current research interests revolve around the concept of heroism and heroic in the Western literary tradition and culture at large, as they pertain to ethics, aesthetics and politics.

28 clear sentences

Tõnis Saadoja

I am truly happy that Kaido Ole no longer has to paint self-portraits with heads that swell like question marks and finally explode. Or depict an artist riding a pencil. Or the way he would push this particular means of painting down his own throat.

Kaido Ole's new exhibition *Handsome Hero and Plenty of Still Lifes* at the Kumu Art Museum offers, after anxious questions, numerous significant answers. The justified price of that, according to the artist, is the above-mentioned images in the exhibition hall (*Kaido's Art School*, Hobusepea Gallery 2010) and in the studio.



Kaido Ole. *Handsome Hero and Plenty of Still Lifes.*
Kumu Art Museum,
27 January–15 April, 2012

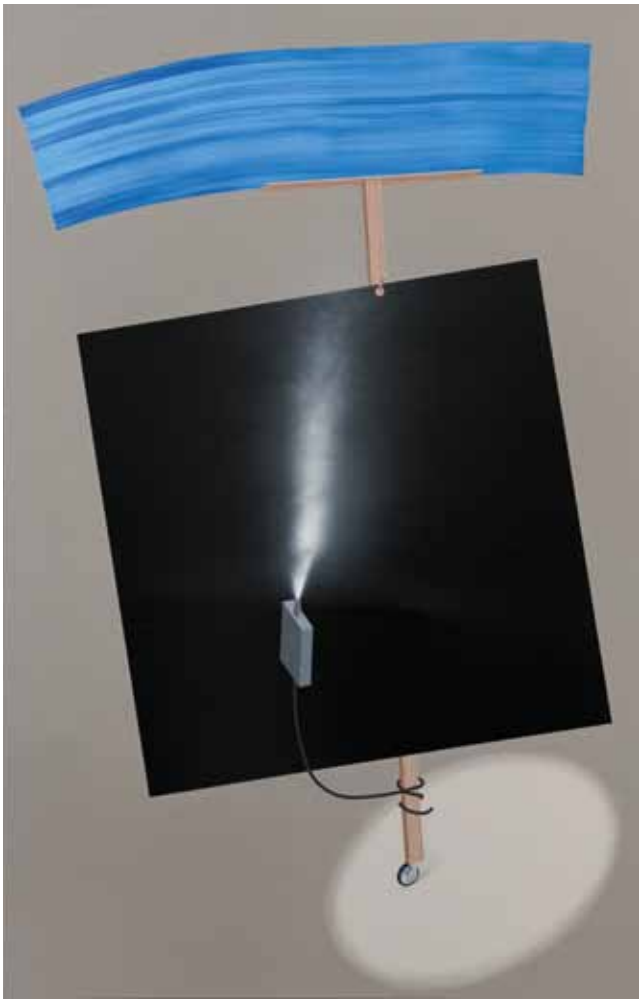
Precisely 11 years have passed since Kaido Ole's previous big exhibition *Basic* (Rotermann Salt Storage, 2001). In the opening speech of that exhibition, the art historian Eha Komissarov praised the artist as one of the few who had moved from the abstract towards the figurative. Looking at today's display, which has a nomenclature analogous to the past one, we notice that, in creating new paintings, Ole has used nearly his entire stylistic and figurative arsenal, from the very beginning, although adding some new methods. He has moved away a bit from literary depiction, and the new works leave a surprisingly good impression, as nobody quite expected this kind of Kaido Ole.

Kaido has claimed that he is not interested in the past and old things; the future matters only in order to call a halt in a dignified manner. What matters is always here and now. Regarding the current exhibition, it does not seem to be quite so simple, but a critical number of changes in his artistic arsenal have been successfully achieved.

Kaido remembers how the poet Andres Ehin once came to his school in Rapla and read the first poem in Spanish. It was cool, *simply because.* Ole's exhibition at Kumu seems, similarly, to be in a foreign language. Probably partly because we do not remember all his previous work, and certainly because the artist has made a maximum effort to divert the public from prejudiced paths. Ole's starting point in that new quality is defined by unexpectedness, and it seems methodically valid. Looking at the works, it becomes apparent that youthfulness and freshness are issues of continuing attitude rather than of time. Ole has repeatedly called himself a modernist (a hopeful seeker), and he allegedly produced this exhibition, too, from the outside to the inside. He primarily meant how this involves filling the given space with pictures and how much painting that would take.

In the exhibition hall, visual parallels inevitably arise with the work of Miks Mitrevics and the latest work of Sigrid Viir, as all three artists mix various consumer goods into weird poetic composites outside their original function. The three artists also all rely on playing with balance, symmetry, laws of physics and different types of matter. Only Mitrevics and Viir work in installation and photography and their work must really and spatially hang together. Kaido Ole's paintings, on the other hand, have discarded gravitation and balance, and act more selfishly and playfully. There are practically no documentary points of contact at the exhibition, except the systematic, realistically painted wheels under every composition.

A large part of contemporary art, which has pretentions of solving problems to the full, technically works on the principle of the vacuum. The place is pumped empty of any excess oxygen, and the focus emerges in the context of strong negative pressure. Tension is achieved by purity, as a contrast with the background of chaotic surroundings. In his picture series, the same has been accomplished by Ole, although at this exhibition we do not see linear processes with clear beginnings and endings, such as the earlier burning of a paper house (*Look Out, Matches II,* 2006), cutting off of fingers (*Speed* III, 2004) or a man and woman undressing with their backs turned to each other (*Two*, 2003). A symbolic vacuum is here created by realistic wheels in illogical balance, which carry spatially, essentially and materially unequal composites.



Kaido Ole. *Still Life with Three Colours.* 2011. 280 x 180 cm. Oil, acrylic and alkyde paint on canvas

The display of Ole's still lifes is airy and oxygen-rich and, perhaps for that reason, a large part of the audience heaved a sigh of relief at the opening, because the display, realised purely by means of painting, easily filled the entire room and expanded the rooms of imagination.

Looking at the pictures in random order, some works become quotations in my memory and compete with other works, e.g. *Still Life in Three Colours* (Ando Keskküla *Still Life XI* and *A Big Still Life I*), *Still Life in Memory of G.R.* (Gerhard Richter's series of candles), *Still Life with Burning Tallinn and a Broken Pipe* (Velikije Luki *Tallinn Burns,* and Jaan Elken's abstractions painted on red slogans), *Small Still Life with a Stone* (Neeme Külm's *Cow Cast in Concrete*), and *Small Still Life with a Self-made*

Kaido Ole. *Still Life with Stone.*
2011. 63 x 55.5 cm.
Oil on canvas

Kaido Ole. *Still Life with Self-designed Form*. 2011.
63 x 55.5 cm. Oil on canvas

Kaido Ole. *Still Life with Burning Tallinn and Broken Pipe.*
2011. 280 x 180 cm.
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Design Form, which directly quotes Ole's own work in the mid-1990s. The paintings are technically more diverse and colourful than those completed since the mid-1990s, but they are also more individual. The exhibition, consisting of canvases of special formats, has no beginning and no end, but it does have an epicentre: *Handsome Hero*. The images of a circle and circulation have been crucial throughout Ole's working life – ball-heads, loudspeakers, a ring of colour and a wheel – and if you ask him why this is he will probably say that the world is, after all, round too. Simple, but true. Or that he has also worked with rectangles and triangles. Also true. However, the current exhibition can structurally be seen as an analogue of the solar system, where a number of smaller planets orbit around the epicentre, besides orbiting around their own axes. Kaido has never been intimidated by big and simplified comparisons.

The coloured side panels of the central work *Handsome Hero* have a purely abstract quality: slightly tattered wood fibre plates are naturally worn and pale, covered with accidental white powder. All this together seems as if the materials come from an unfinished interior. The artist has never concealed his preference for building materials and living space aesthetics over traditional painting, and his treatment of colours has always been a carefully designed short distance in the painted space, rather than a conscious regard for traditional colour perspective or natural topics of *chiaroscuro*.

He has always seen painting as the job of making pictures which can be adapted according to the available space. It is thus no surprise that, in colours and perspective, he relies on the rules of a possible interior rather than the objective exterior. As far as I know, Kaido has very few exterior views, landscapes or nature paintings: Brezhnev's grave, painted together with Marko Mäetamm (John Smith *Brezhnev*, 2001), a green slope with Hollywood-style letters, *HOLOCAUST* (John Smith *Holocaust*, 2001), and an aerial photograph of Rapla (John Smith *On the Airplane*, 2003 and *Marko und Kaido II*, 2002). These resemble comics and do not have any stylistic pretensions. The more so that all the above-mentioned paintings are presented as pictures inside pictures, a view out a window.

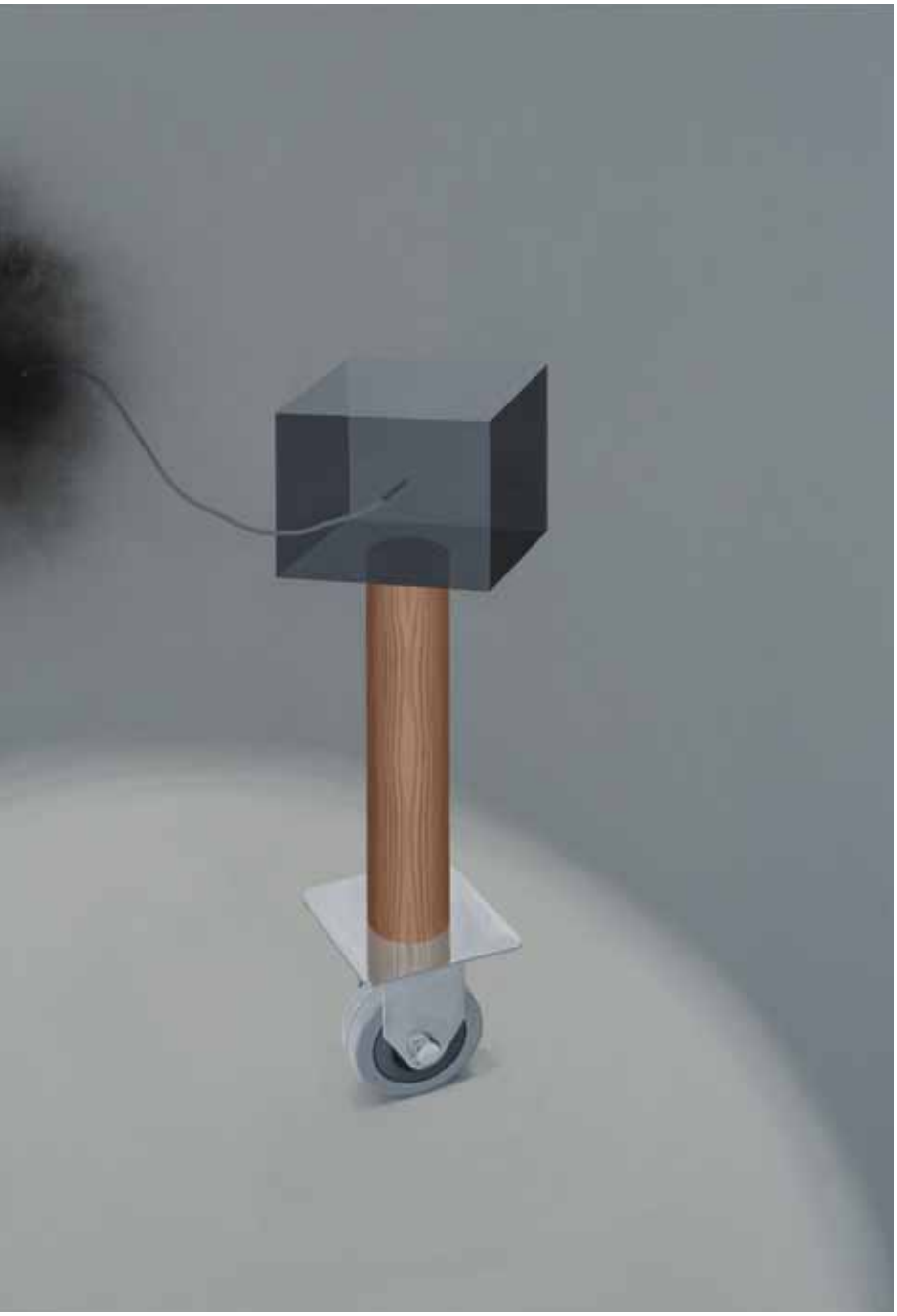
Ole has always got the *sound*, and taste and tastelessness are such polar concepts for him that he is actually unable to confuse them, so he just has to choose among his skills and knowledge. I don't think it is accidental that the exhibition's only grating picture is entitled *Still Life with Ill-fitting Objects.*

The Band (2003–2005) series used to have an additional two carved wooden figures, of a boy and a girl, which the artist asked someone else to produce, so that they would be authentically weird independently of him. The guest artist Marta Stratskas exhibits a few expressive pieces, which in Kaido's words he was not able to produce; all personal themes in different painting trends are presented as a card catalogue on equal-sized wheels, each as a possible painting method and not as the only correct solution. The only thing that is objectively correct is the overall picture, the exhibition structure.

Although the painted wheels underneath compositions are there to provide a fragile balance and not to force movement, images of the possible variations in this series roll towards open infinity. This may sound like an art merchant's argument but, firstly, a series of still lifes can be continued *ad infinitum* and, secondly, it can successfully separate single instruments or groups of instruments from the whole, whereas a symphonic dimension is only guaranteed by a massive compact work.

It is no wonder that what we always first associate with Kaido is his essential modernity, his contemporaneousness. Many know exactly how tight the trousers can be you want to pull on but, in the case of Ole, his content and form constitute an original and natural, even a timeless whole. Contemporaneousness as a concept, not as a changing aesthetics. At the same time, Kaido has never concealed his affection for new things and bourgeois comforts, although the undertone of this affection is a wish to be socially normal, resemble others, and show solidarity in his position. Another thing that I always associate with him is the artist's desire for democracy, a right, together with adequate duties and freedom, to do exactly what you wish, although some things are of course inevitable. This, however, is not polite social democracy, but more demanding and total, something ideally resembling an equal-opportunity monarchy, where everybody is king. Quite an unrealistic ideal, but Ole will not give it up easily.

He has no problem painting an identical picture of his Great-Uncle Eduard Ole's *Table* (Eduard Ole, *Table*, 1924 / Kaido Ole *Table*, 1996), although the comparison embarrassed him. He frankly admitted that "the clumsy bits where Eduard had clearly failed, I managed much better". He willingly supervises students in a week-long workshop, where they paint copies of his famous loudspeaker, although at the end of the week he asks each to put their own name on the back of the picture. Just in case. He has no problem speaking, together with students, in a school hall to explain art to young people, even if this requires silly dance movements or a sincere confession about his connection with jumpers knitted by his mother. Kaido does not like theatre, because it involves acting. When someone shits his pants on stage, he does this as an actor, and it cannot be compared with the real act, which anyone would like to show others. Every evening at the same time. Or do you know anyone who is so annoyed by a tasteless or unsuitable design of an original record sleeve that it must be removed to ensure any enjoyment of the music?



Kaido Ole. *Still Life with Black Death.* 2011. 200 x 190 cm. Oil and alkyde spray on canvas

The above attempt to characterise Kaido Ole is certainly quite fascinating, and we would not have known it if he hadn't talked about it himself. Kaido is indeed often portrayed as a pedantic style guru, great fun and a tireless storyteller, which is all naturally true. But how often do people notice a desperate effort behind his openness and occasional brutality to conduct a dialogue where nothing is lost, a wish to achieve final clarity and understanding, through fully open discussion on a totally equal basis? I have a feeling that talking is a method that Ole uses to realise his ideal democracy, because you can, after all, talk with anyone about anything. Either about art or a new-fangled gadget. Ironically, this often works against him and the dialogues turn into lengthy monologues, where the speaker himself finally gets lost. The inevitable weakness of his monologues and destructiveness in finding a positive solution is obvious in his double painting *Speed I* (2004), where two cars called Kaido and Ole crash head-on. The same can be seen in the painting *Self-love* (2006), where Kaido and his twin brother stand bravely in water but are unable to save the burning paper navy, because one brother wears a black and the other a white shirt, and they keep close to each other. Thus, in terms of a positive answer, he values dialogue outside himself. And being positive, or rather avoiding pessimism, is in his view a conscious consideration at this exhibition ('Kaido Ole, at 48', *Sirp*, 27.01.2012).

Kaido has often depicted both questions and answers in his work. He has replaced long monologues in conversations with progressing picture series or monotonous repetition, for example 36 silent loudspeakers. However, isn't it inevitable that graphically expressing, word-by-word, some kind of literary train of thought turns into caricature? Isn't it too one-sided and predictable, dull and unnecessary in the longer perspective? Isn't the only thing that saves everything from caricature the kind of vagueness or openness existing in loudspeakers, *Self-love* and colour circles (*Questions*, 2008)?

The photo installation *Meeting* (2007) shows a cross-section of society sitting at a long table, but the chairman's seat is empty. In the video *Anthem* (2007), a dozen or so people sing one word in the anthem and the end result is a democratic song. The series of paintings *Questions* mixes the main colours in different sectors of a circle into a spiral, an increasingly dirty psychedelia, depending on how vigorously they have been spread along the radius of the circle with an even brush. A grey and serious question mark sits in the middle of the paintings.

Caricature potential is also seen in his new paintings *Big Social Still Life I and II*, where a

basketful of brown brushstrokes supports a similar but single brushstroke sitting in a large cube. In fact, his entire 11-year-old series of paintings called *Basic* can be regarded as caricatures, where grey ball-heads do everything we as humans do every day. Works at the new exhibition, such as *Still Life with a Green Plate*, *Colourful Still Life* and *Still Life with Three Boxes of Ultramarine,* seem like caricatures of painting itself. The question is not whether a caricature is essentially good or bad, but rather to what extent literariness maintains an interesting balance with the chosen medium. Or how can one underline a specific quality that would distinguish the end result from possible alternatives? It seems to me that the question presented as a dirty circle of colour is from the visual culture's point of view clearly smarter than a painted question mark.

The strongest caricature parallel at the exhibition is inevitably linked with its central work *Handsome Hero* – a chequered monster holding a torch or a flower, standing on the same kind of wheels as the smaller still lifes. The only person at the exhibition besides the torch-holder is Kaido himself, who looks up at the hero. Against the background of all Ole's earlier work, this is perhaps the most illustrative construction of the topic of potential *answer,* and consciously the most hollow, ironic, embarrassing and hopeless. At the *Meeting*, the seat of the chairman was fortunately empty.

Who, after all, could be the one and only hero (for Kaido Ole)? As far as I know, Ole does not believe in any god. Politically, he is unable to define himself either as left- or right-wing. I have never known his favourite artist, band, perfume or film. If the evening telly is showing *CSI*, he probably watches it, but soon it will certainly be switched to something else. Ole also hates any kind of patronising attitude towards himself or others.

However hard he tries to put together a chart to establish the leader, he keeps in mind the intelligent and avant-garde question: who is the second, third...

The role of *Handsome Hero* is obviously to rehabilitate the surrounding paintings by comparison. We make a fuss about the fact that we always notice the biggest and the most clearly delineated first, that the hero's concept is faulty because he is often nothing but handsome, and we cannot identify with him, although on the basis of smaller similar features we should deal with both ourselves and the surroundings, without seeing similar wheels that have been so illustratively painted underneath. They are different but they are there.

I have recently quite often caught myself in the heretical thought that when a reply takes a long time to come, maybe there is something wrong with the question. I am not sure whether it always works like that in practice, but it seems fitting for Kaido's new paintings. A few years ago our conversations concluded with the observation that an idea was good, but not a good painting-idea, whereas looking at today's exhibition, it is quite clear that it primarily rests on painting ideas, and their controllable intellectual goodness is placed on a tiny wheel underneath every composition. The laws of physics would not keep such a composition together but, from the point of view of the entirety of pictures, these wheels are an absolute necessity. Let us be honest – if the wheels were to be removed, the whole display would become legless. With the help of these delicate balance points, Ole has built up a large slice of world, and when at the opening I overheard someone's slightly ironic 'World of Kaido', it did not in the least diminish the artist's brilliant idea of inserting these delicate balance points into our empathy. Because the imaginary attempt to remove wheels or move 'implausible' pictures in either of the established plausible directions (abstract/realist) would cause the pictures to fall apart.

In *Monologue,* filmed by Flo Kasearu this obsessive talker, who himself claims to like to 'wag his tongue', sits alone for 35 minutes and 40 seconds on a chair in an empty exhibition hall. He faces his public, dusts the camera lens, makes an official phone-call; before the end of the video he changes his orange shirt for the same white one which he wears in his work where he stares at the great hero, and finally utters a more or less considered sentence. I think what he says is true and there is no need to argue with it, because the paintings in the exhibition hall are saying the same thing, only 28 times more excitingly.

Still Life in Memory of G.R. has a haunting effect. As a reference to Gerhard Richter's series of candles, a living person (as of January 2012) depicted as dead evokes a slight sense of alienation. True, Richter will die as well one day, as he obviously has the same kind of realistic wheels as we all do.

See also at
www.kaidoole.eu

Tõnis Saadoja
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17 pictures of Paris in spring

Marko Mäetamm

This winter I lived most of the time in my studio instead of at home. I had said goodbye to my wife and kids, took my over-life-size suitcase and, catching the last tram, went to my studio. Somehow I felt very depressed but I didn't really care, as the whole winter had been extraordinarily depressing for me.

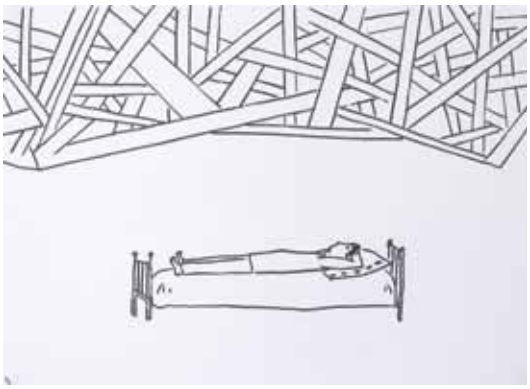
My flight was very early in the morning. Or rather late at night. I had bought a yoghurt and one banana for breakfast but I couldn't manage to eat any of it. I felt a kind of panic. I remember having a similar feeling when I went to London for six months in 2006. So I was sitting in my studio looking at my yoghurt and one banana and I felt like yuck. Later in the airplane, I became hungry of course and I couldn't understand how I could be so stupid and not eat anything before.

It was total spring in Paris. Especially compared to the weather in Tallinn – cold, icy permafrost, and hills of frozen dirt.

Although my residence was just around the corner from Gare du Nord, I still managed to get lost. I took an incredibly long walk in my winter clothes and I was dripping sweat when I arrived. But that is very typical: I always get lost.

So I was wandering around with my huge bags containing everything I thought I would need for the next three months.

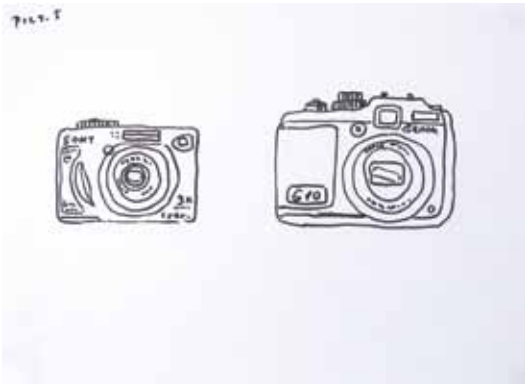
My room in Recollet was OK, kind of a live-work space. Nice cute attic room on the sixth floor, right under the roof. You could take an elevator or you could take a narrow round staircase. It had a strange ceiling: lots of massive brown wooden beams holding up the roof, and they looked really ancient. Later, I discovered that somebody had carved on one of them, counting days and weeks, and it made me a bit scared. Anyway, this labyrinth of beams became quite a problem for me at one point. They became like some kind of living organism above my head, able to influence my mind. In the end, I was almost having conversations with them.



At first I had no idea what to do in Paris. Or – I had one. I had started one series of pictures at home and now I thought I could just finish it. It was about a father who is a hunter and is hunting his wife and kids at home. My idea was to make 30 drawings altogether, similar to another series of drawings I had made earlier. I thought 30 drawings was a good idea.

I have two cameras. One is a litte older and not too good, and the other one is newer and it should be quite good. The smaller one is very handy and easy to use and it actually takes quite good pictures. But the bigger one makes much bigger files in case I want to print them out. So it is

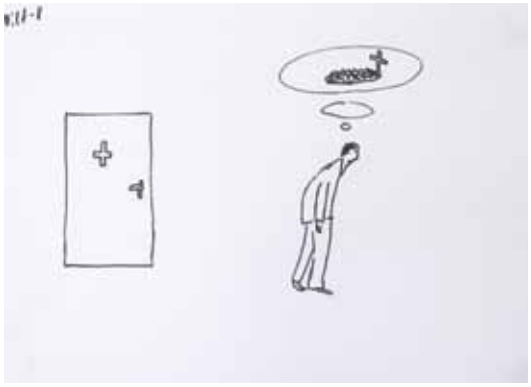
always difficult to decide which camera to use and therefore I keep carrying both of them with me. So I walked around the city every day – two cameras in my bag. And when I found something to take a picture of, I took a picture with both of them.



It was somewhere in a park the other day. I saw two people sitting very close to each other, like lovers, and talking. I was wondering what if it was not actually how it seemed. What if they were not even friends at all? What if there was something very serious and bad going on? We like to think of Paris as the city of love and romance, where people are supposed to have only a good time, where there is no place for sadness or other bad things. At this point, I started taking pictures of seemingly happy people in parks and creating different kinds of dialogues I imagined they might have. It became a set of works called *Postcards from Paris*, kind of antiromantic scenes of the life of Parisians. And so I walked through almost all the parks in Paris with my two cameras during one whole month.

Nights were somehow depressing in this room, with all the beams hanging above my head. Every evening I had many glasses of wine plus some beers if necessary to fall asleep and I never got up before noon. I had a gigantic chestnut tree outside my window which was in bloom in April and pigeons really liked these white flowers. So the first thing I saw each morning when I opened my eyes was the fat grey pigeons climbing on the tree and swallowing those beautiful white flowers. They were far too heavy for the branches and it didn't seem at all normal to see them so high off the ground. But they were really clever and when I'd try to take a picture of them they'd immediately disappear into the foliage.

The winter before I left Tallinn was one of the most stressful and darkest I had ever had in my life, and I had picked up some strange stomach problem that rapidly got worse when I arrived in romantic Paris. I had an incredibly unpleasant feeling in my lower stomach and bowels and the only thing that made me feel better was keeping my body in a horizontal position. Paris of course would be the best place to die, especially in spring and especially for an Estonian artist. And I was thinking of all those stories of those Estonian artists who moved to Paris to get famous but ended up sleeping in the street and dying of tuberculosis or simply starving to death at the beginning of the last century. And my poor stomach only got worse. Eventually, I had to go to the doctor, although I tried to postpone it as long as I could. The doctor gave me some pills and asked if any of my relatives had died of intestinal tract cancer and I said that no one had. Later, it turned out that some really had, and that made my mood even more apocalyptic than it was before.



When my wife and kids came to see me, we visited all the places a proper tourist should visit in Paris. For me, the coolest place was Paris Disneyland. I had recently been to the opening of the Venice Biennale and was very surprised at how similar these two milieus were. Both had pavilions and enormous queues at doors and people standing patiently in these enormous queues to get a chance to have a bit of the magic hiding behind the pavilion walls. From the practical point of view, both places are completely

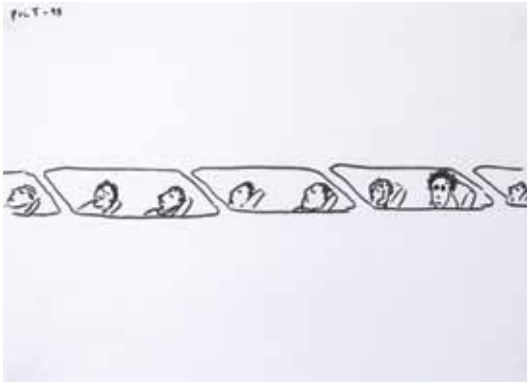
pointless but totally monumental and expensive at the same time. The installations are ambitious, complex and obviously very expensive. And the organizers have managed to make us believe that we must come from however far and pay however much money just to have a chance to see it. Some installations in Paris Disneyland would easily fit in Venice and vice versa. But I really liked being in both of these places a lot.

Another time, at Monoprix, when I wanted to buy some food, my card was rejected. I had recently bought some expensive tickets with it and managed to exceed my monthly limit, although it was only the beginning of the month. I didn't have any cash either so all I could do was just walk away.

As I was not feeling very well, at one point I didn't really want to go out and hang around any more. I had of course walked all through the city many times by then. Plus I was jogging in the beginning so I had also jogged through the whole city more than once. So I decided to go on and work for the rest of the days I still had left. I started to animate one series of watercolour drawings I had made some time ago. I actually had already the idea to make an animation when I had made this set of works because I thought it would work better that way. But it turned out to be such time-consuming work! In the end, I had around 30 hours of footage and it took me almost four months to cut it all into a 21.30 minute piece of work when I was back in Tallinn.

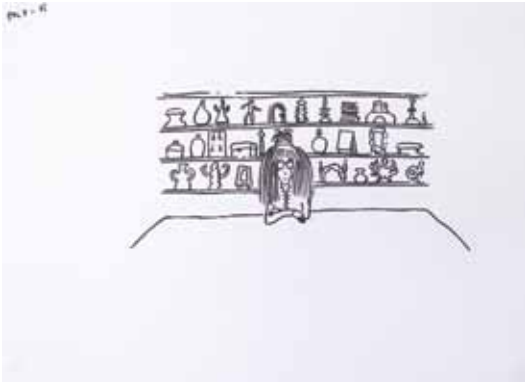
I hardly left my attic room. Only to go to Monoprix for food and drinks or to the BHV superstore for some art supplies. And every Thursday a cleaning lady came.

I made a trip to London on the Eurostar train and on the way back I really panicked. All of a sudden, I started to think that I was on the wrong train and going to Brussels instead of Paris. When it was boarding I didn't really follow the signs but just walked with the crowd and, as there were two trains departing at nearly the same time, one to Paris and one to Brussels, I was sure I had taken the one to Brussels. And nobody checked the tickets as I was already in the departure zone. So I was sitting on the train and watching the darkness outside the window and thinking about what I should do if I really arrived in Brussels in the middle of the night. I didn't have enough money for a hotel and I didn't have any really close friends there either. What a terrible situation! And I didn't dare ask anybody, as it would have been too weird to ask in the middle of the journey where this Eurostar was going. I panicked more and more and I felt better only when I realized that we were really arriving in Paris.



Another day I saw a police raid on some guys who were selling small metal souvenir Eiffel Towers on the steet. It was somewhere near the real Eiffel Tower, where most of them were wandering around with bundled up Eiffel Towers. The policemen were not dressed as policemen and they appeared from nowhere. It was such a mess; everybody started running. The police spotted one guy and they caught him when he was trying to run into the metro station. His huge bundle broke and the whole street was suddenly full of shiny Eiffel Towers. Terrible clatter and hundreds of tiny litte shiny Eiffel Towers.

There was one shop at the end of Rue du Faubourg-Saint-Denis where a nice hippie was selling all sorts of beautiful stuff from India. I bought something for my wife from her, we had a conversation about different things and I said I was an artist and staying in a residence around the corner. She was curious about what kind of art I did and I gave her my homepage address. The next time I went to her shop to say hello, the hippie said she had been to my homepage and that now I scared her. Then she started talking about some artists she knew and what strange stuff they all did and we ended up with the idea that art is an interesting thing. Then she asked about my recent projects here during my residency and about my next projects, and in the end I bought some interesting things from India from her at half price.



When it was time to come home I couldn't find a place to buy bubble wrap to pack my stuff. So in the end I walked into the India shop again and asked the hippie. She knew of course and said if I mentioned her name they would even give me a friendly price. The shop was just behind the corner and I didn't understand why I hadn't been able to find it myself. And I did tell them her name and they did give me a friendly price. In the end, I didn't even need all of it so I decided to give the rest of the bubble wrap to the hippie because I was really grateful for her help. She was very grateful too and said "well, let's do like they do in…" (she named some place but I can't remember what it was…), and she gave me something very interesting from India in return.

On the last day of my residency, 30 June, I was sitting on my packed bags, waiting for someone to take over the room. I was not sure if I was happy or sad to leave and whether the three months was a good time or a bad time. I was drinking my last beer, looking at my chestnut tree through the window and thinking of the pigeons who had eaten all its flowers in April. Was that bad for the tree or was it just a normal thing? Then I looked at all the maze of ancient wooden beams above my head, and at my beautiful, clean and empty room...
And then I thought that I needed to start doing all sorts of things again when I got home…

Marko Mäetamm was Lauréat du programme de résidences internationales Ville de Paris / Institut francais aux Récollets in 2011.

Marko Mäetamm

(1965), received an MA from the Estonian Academy of Arts. He is a freelance artist, and works with a wide range of media including photography, sculpture, animation, painting and text. He has exhibited internationally and represented Estonia at the 50th Venice Biennial in 2003 and at the 52nd Venice Biennial in 2007.
www.maetamm.net

Conservatism appeals to people's emotions

Interview with György Szabó

Eero Epner (EE): In following the political situation in Hungary, I cannot resist the temptation to ask a simple question: What the hell is going on? Hungary has been kind of a symbol of Europe, or at least central Europe, and therefore one has the right to presume that 'European values' will be preserved there. But obviously not. What is your personal opinion of what is happening in Hungary, and why is it happening?
György Szabó (GS): It is very simple. Orban, our PM, is an obsessed person. He is addicted to political power. He has shown a great deal of talent in political games and has an exquisite sense of repositioning himself from time to time. He is a master of discrediting anybody in the opposition and even members of his own intimate political circle. But the biggest tragedy for Hungary is that he is incapable of governing with patience, being a political figure with a short temper. This dominant trait – impatience – has ambushed him, not leaving him any time to deal with the demanding, long-term economic and social process. He wants to find quick solutions to everything. This regal attitude raises him above society, dimming his ability to see reality. Although he may have a good idea, without enough time it can only be a mirage. He isn't able to work together with serious experts over longer time periods. A professional is fully aware of the necessity of time in attaining important social goals.

EE: How has Orban's policy affected the cultural policy of Hungary?
GS: After the failure of his first reign, he dropped culture and stopped caring about it. He considered the cultural elite a political hindrance. It's obvious that there is no analysis behind any of his decisions. He condemns thoughtful voices, especially in Budapest, the sin city. Under the rule of Gábor Demszky, the liberal cultural era never triumphed over Orban's power. So this layer of society is his enemy. He has pushed them aside in recent months.

EE: What is the artist's responsibility in this kind of situation?
GS: The artist should never serve politicians. The artist can only serve freedom. Where there is no freedom, you cannot find public art; art exists only in little cells, at certain moments, and in underground movements.

EE: You were fired a couple of weeks ago. I've been following the situation a little bit and it seems that we can speak of the conflict not between individuals (or maybe that as well), but between two different discourses, or two different ways of thinking about culture. On one side are clearly those who would like to 'open the doors', invite in more 'domestic artists' and attach themselves more to the countryside and to 'understandable' art pieces, such as stand-ups or children's theatre. On the other side are those who believe in another way of thinking about art. Do you agree with this idea of separation, and how would you describe this second way?
GS: I guess your analysis is correct. Certain artists are always ready to collaborate. Theatre directors are always appointed by politicians in Hungary. But now that pluralism has been weakened, this political service by artist-clients is a much bigger sin than in a balanced political world. This is a serious sin and the consequences will be even more serious.

EE: Boris Groys writes in his essay *The Curator as Iconoclast* (2007): "The independent curator is a radically secularized artist. He is an artist because he does everything artists do. But he is an artist who has lost the artist's aura, who no longer has magical transformative powers at his disposal, who cannot endow objects with artistic status. He doesn't use objects – art objects included – for art's sake, but rather abuses them, makes them profane. Yet it is precisely this that makes the figure of the independent curator so attractive and so essential to the art of today."

How would you describe the role of the curator in contemporary art/theatre/dance? And what have been your personal starting points for curating?
GS: As a curator, I do not stand with the artists but I serve them. I keep a distance. This was my sin and the reason I was fired. To me, the most important thing is that the artist resonates with the outer world that surrounds us. To me, the artist's main role is to take responsibility and to set forth what our society cannot reveal or predict, something that is already clear to the artist from the state of society but that is still invisible to the public.

EE: Arguments similar to those surrounding the Trafó 'case' are also being used in the Tallinn Art Hall, which was taken over by a new director, who sacked all the curators and talks about the need to 'bring art closer to the people', because "when the visitor numbers of an exhibition at an art hall are under five hundred, it shows how much people are no longer used to going to an art exhibition" and "the Art Hall is increasingly orientated towards a niche audience." By niche exhibitions she means those "that are clearly targeted at a minority group, whether gays or feminists or ..."*. Is all of Europe and its art getting more and more conservative? Why?
GS: Because globalism happened too quickly in our region and people feel that this competition will defeat them, that these new economic and cultural transmissions will force them into unbearable competition. They feel feeble and vulnerable. For them to stand on their own feet again will require some common element, a new base that connects people, makes them stronger and that can revive this lost community's feeling of a new common foundation. Supranational capitalism ignores the people, and serves only a small layer of entrepreneurs, whose only aim is to maximise their profit. This new slavery is the cradle of a new conservatism that appeals to people's emotions but never serves their interests. But emotions always override sensibility. This empirical formula changes only after great wars.

EE: How can we fight against this? What should the resistance look like?
GS: Resistance is basically an existential question for many people. The average citizen lives in poor or even very poor conditions. Resistance that depends on state resources is impossible. The market also cannot provide adequate shelter. Everybody can be crushed easily through different tricks. Anonymously, you can do very little. Fighting to get your name out to the public often means that the power structure can swoop down on you at any time and in any way.

EE: Do you agree that an artist today needs to think not only in terms of 'personal' or 'political', but also in terms of 'public', and instead of politics the artist should think about 'cultural policy'? What I mean is that public opinion and cultural policy are no longer outside of the art discourse, something which an artist can use and reflect, but are now one integral part of it: the public sphere is written into art more strongly than ever. Or am I exaggerating?
GS: Yes, I agree. A responsible high-level artist cannot continue working as in the past. He or she must reflect on the changed circumstances and this reflection must appear in their work. The ambient is the connection of the artist to the society. He or she must breathe with the people and their problems. Those who avoid this role are not interesting to me because remaining in silence means that they are collaborators with the power structure. That is dangerous, because the artist is then supporting injustice. That is betrayal. Betrayal cannot lead to a state of freedom. I know this is a radical view-point.

EE: What are your personal plans for the future?
GS: I have to find a job wherever I can, in or beyond art. I can even imagine working outside the Hungarian borders. Maybe in Finland. If you want to open a Trafó in Helsinki, I'll be there. I like Helsinki. I am optimistic and trust in my creativity and my fame. I get hundreds of 'condolences' from known and unknown people saying I do excellent work.

EE: Do you still hope that things get better? Why?
GS: We must be positive. We must be cats. A cat always lands on her feet.

* Quotes by Karin Hallas-Murula, new director of the Tallinn Art Hall, in 'Karin Hallas-Murula teeb kõik, et kunst ei peletaks', *Postimees*, 19.10.2011

For 13 years, György Szabó was head of the Trafó Contemporary Art Centre in Budapest. Trafó became known as one of European leading production houses and performance venues, which gathered artists, choreographers and groups across the continent. At the beginning of the current year, Szabó was unexpectedly sacked by the city government. Many regard this as yet another culture-hostile step by the conservative Hungarian government. Szabó was replaced by a dancer with no experience in heading any institution, who has already announced that Trafó was 'too international' by presenting art that people could not understand. The new boss also promised to pay more attention to serving the public. All this has attracted international attention and many prominent artists, theatre directors, producers and choreographers have joined in the protests.

Tracing Bosch and Bruegel:
Four Paintings Magnified

Merike Kurisoo

One of the major art events in Estonia in 2011 was the exhibition at the Kadriorg Art Museum, *Bosch&Bruegel – Four Paintings Magnified,* which opened in October. The display originated in an international research project and focused on four 16th century Netherlandish paintings from different European art collections. They all tackle the same topic in a similar composition: a scene from the New Testament showing Christ chasing the moneylenders from the temple. Besides sharing the same topic, another common factor in the four paintings, in the National Gallery of Denmark in Copenhagen, in the Glasgow Museums, in the Art Museum of Estonia and in a Swiss private collection, is that 20th century art history has associated them with two great names of Netherlandish art, Hieronymus Bosch (1450–1516) and Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1526/30–1569). The display reveals provenance and authorship issues of the four paintings, which rely on an unknown phantom work, as well as explaining the complicated iconography and presenting the anatomy of these artworks, layer by layer.

Why, however, is an exhibition associated with the two biggest names in Netherlandish art taking place here on the edge of Europe, and not for example at the Prado Museum in Madrid or at the Art History Museum in Vienna, which boast the largest Bosch and Bruegel collections? And how did it happen that the Kadriorg Art Museum was the initiator of such an exciting research project of technical art history, instead of being initiated by a Dutch or Belgian university or research centre? Answers to these questions lie in the questions concerning the painting at Kadriorg Art Museum: who, where and when was it painted? The four strikingly similar paintings encouraged local art historians to seek answers with the help of an international research group.

Perhaps the fact that Estonian art collections contain very few works attributed to the great masters of world art provided enough impetus and courage to approach the issue differently. At a time when museums are expected to organise huge blockbuster exhibitions and visitors undertake pilgrimages to well-promoted masterpieces, it certainly takes courage to put together an exhibition that raises questions about the legitimacy of these great masters. When the names of Bosch or Bruegel disappear from the labels of these works, their value in the eyes of viewers decreases. However, the current exhibition shows that raising such questions helps researchers and viewers find different, maybe more intriguing, answers, which open up new understandings of 16th century art and its practices.

Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Bruegel the Elder are stars of Netherlandish art, and their works are coveted by art collections around the world. The paintings in the collections of the Glasgow Museums, the National Gallery of Denmark and the private collection have been known to art historians since the beginning of the 20th century. The Copenhagen painting, previously attributed to Bosch, was in 1931 instead attributed to Pieter Brueghel the Elder by Max Friedländer, one of the leading connoisseurs of Netherlandish art. The painting in Glasgow and the one in the private collection have both been considered works or copies of someone imitating Bosch. The Tallinn painting is the least known amongst researchers. Information about its existence reached wider audiences in 2001, when the picture was displayed at the major Hieronymus Bosch exhibition at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam. The Kadriorg painting has belonged to the collections of the Art Museum of Estonia since 1955, when it was handed over to the museum by the permanent representation of the Estonian SSR in Moscow. Information on how the picture came to Tallinn is, unfortunately, fragmentary. In 1920 the painting was acquired by an Estonian former state official Albert Org in Petrograd, and it was held by the Estonian Consulate General in Leningrad until 1930. From there, the painting travelled to the Embassy of the Republic of Estonia in Moscow. How the picture ended up in Russia and which collection sold it to Albert Org are not known. However, during the restoration of the painting in the late 1990s, a small fragment of an Italian newspaper was found on the back of the picture. It was thus thought that at some point during the second half of the 19th century the painting might have been in Italy. The other three paintings also appeared on the world art scene at the beginning of the 20th century, when they were in private collections. The research project examined all four paintings on the basis of the same parameters. The research yielded surprising new results, at the same time leaving some questions unanswered. It turned out that the earliest of the four paintings was the one in the private collection, which was previously thought to be a later copy. Dendrochronological analysis showed that its completion time was the first half or middle of the 16th century. The Tallinn and Copenhagen paintings probably date from the 1560s and 1570s. The latest of all was the Glasgow painting, completed at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, probably as a fake Bosch. The issue of the authorship of the paintings, completed in different workshops, is still awaiting answers.

One of the most exciting parts of the exhibition is the presentation of the results of the technical research. Interactive multimedia solutions demonstrate the anatomy of the artworks. The four paintings have been completely taken apart. The big screen allows the visitor

to unpeel the paintings, layer by layer, and compare them. Analysis of infrared imaging, X-radiography and macro-photos reveal the creation process of the artworks. Information previously only accessible to professionals is now presented to the viewer playfully and comprehensibly. This is a totally new method of presentation in Estonian exhibition history, and for people well-versed in today's virtual visuality, it makes an artwork's archaeology much easier to grasp.

The material on the four paintings' creation context, inspiring artistic examples and pictorial programme are also presented through multimedia solutions. The viewer learns what a 16th century artwork consisted of and how it was produced. Layer by layer, a world unfolds, and we see how a painting emerges out of wooden planks and colour pigments, and from what various parts of the world these materials were gathered. In today's world of the artist as an individual creator, it may be difficult to understand the process in the 16th century, where a whole team was involved in creating an artwork. Observing the workshops, we see how works of well-known masters were copied and repeated, and learn why this was done so extensively. The 16th century Netherlandish art market and middle-class art buyers set their own requirements on art. Popular themes emerged, which the wealthier bourgeoisie wished to see in their homes. The topic of the four paintings – Christ chasing the moneylenders from the temple – was one of them. However, the New Testament scene has not been presented true to the text, but through an ironic angle. The Christian pictorial theme is interwoven with scenes from folklore, where proverbs and word play have been transformed into pictorial language, thus providing the work with new meanings that are not so easy to interpret today. Decoding the iconography of 16th century artworks is complicated, as people today find it difficult to understand the context, and many original shades of meaning may have been lost in the course of centuries of interpretation. The exhibition skilfully opens various fields of meaning of that time, while leaving the viewers room for interpretation as well.

Bosch&Bruegel – Four Paintings Magnified is simultaneously an exhibition and a research project. Besides presenting the four paintings and telling their stories, visitors are also offered the materials of technological research. The display is set up as an art thriller, where every new page promises an unexpected solution. However, just as a reader has to wait for the very last page, the final solution here has not yet been reached. Research on the four paintings continues. The international technical art history conference in 2011 in Tallinn will be followed up by a conference in May 2012 in Copenhagen. A catalogue on the research results will come out shortly. In 2012 the exhibition travels to Copenhagen and Glasgow. In these towns, however, the four paintings will not be displayed together: the multimedia solutions will be presented together with paintings belonging to the specific collections.

Curators: Hilkka Hiiop and Greta Koppel (Tallinn)
Content: Dr. Erma Hermens (Glasgow), Greta Koppel (Tallinn) and Dr. Jørgen Wadum (Copenhagen)
Conservators of the paintings: Alar Nurkse (Tallinn) and Hannah Tempest (Copenhagen)
Design and multimedia concept: Modern Talking (Tallinn)
Homepage: www.bosch-bruegel.com
The exhibition was supplemented by various programmes for the public, workshops and a film programme for secondary school children.

CONFERENCES RELATED TO THE EXHIBITION:

13–14 May 2011 *Techniques of Art History: Technical Art History,* Kadriorg Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia

21–22 May 2012 *Copying, Replicating & Emulating Paintings in the 15th–18th Centuries,* National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen, Denmark

The exhibition received three annual Estonian museum awards in 2011:
The annual science award in 2011 to Greta Koppel (for an international research project on technical art history, *Bosch&Bruegel – Four Paintings Magnified*).
The title of Marketing Person of 2011 to Kadi Polli (for the exhibition *Bosch&Bruegel – Four Paintings Magnified* at Kadriorg Art Museum).
The title of Conservator of 2011 to Hilkka Hiiop (for the exhibition *Samson and Delilah. The story of an Italian Painting,* and for the multimedia project at the Kadriorg exhibition *Bosch&Bruegel – Four Paintings Magnified).*

Merike Kurisoo
is a curator of the Niguliste collection at the Art Museum of Estonia. Her main research field is medieval and early modern sacral art. She studied at the Estonian Academy of Arts and at the University of Tartu. Kurisoo is currently working on her PhD at Tallinn University, focusing on use and re-use of medieval church interior and furnishing in post-Reformation Estonia and Livonia.

Resurrecting past futures

Thomas Cubbin

Every new year, we are reminded of the failings of late Soviet architecture when the film comedy *The Irony of Fate* (1975) is seen by millions across the former Soviet Union. Zhenya is due to celebrate the new year in his recently built apartment block with his fiancée in Moscow, but after drinking with his friends he ends up on a plane to Leningrad. Having slept through the entire flight, he stumbles into a taxi, tells the driver his address and is taken to a street in Leningrad with the same name. He arrives at an identical pre-fabricated housing block complete with the same entrance hall, internal layout and decoration. He then opens the door to what he believes to be his own apartment – with his key that fits in an identical lock. In this instance, the uniformity of housing is redeemed by the love which blossoms between Zhenya and the unwitting owner of his apartment's identical twin. You might not fall in love with the objects of post-war Soviet design currently on display at the Lithuanian National Gallery of Art, but maybe you will come to understand them in new and unexpected ways.

The two new shows which opened last December in Vilnius robustly challenge the view that designers and architects working in the Soviet Union were little more than unimaginative slaves to state planning. *Modernisation: Baltic Art, Design and Architecture in the 1960s–1970s* presents a critical assessment of how individuals working in industry attempted to implement the Soviet authorities' modernisation agenda: in architecture, urban planning, industrial design, fashion, graphics and applied art. The large collection of objects on display hints at the broad influences affecting the design of this period; in particular the revival of pre-war modernism and importation of Scandinavian taste to the region, which was then transported across the Soviet Union in the form of desirable furniture and consumer goods. Yet the exhibition is not celebratory in tone: it highlights the fact that designers were often successful in their attempts to modernize the material environment because they were forced to think creatively around the ideological and bureaucratic hurdles they faced. The show contains many prototypes and nearly-realised dreams, alongside objects which show how the Soviet Union modernised: architecturally engaging cultural centres, cinemas and resort complexes were built, and we see the abstract mass-produced textiles of Aino Alamaa and Leesi Erm, light modern furniture and new foodstuffs neatly bundled into stylish packages.

At an exhibition of work by Aino Alamaa and Leesi Erm. Tallinn, 1964. The National Archives of Estonia

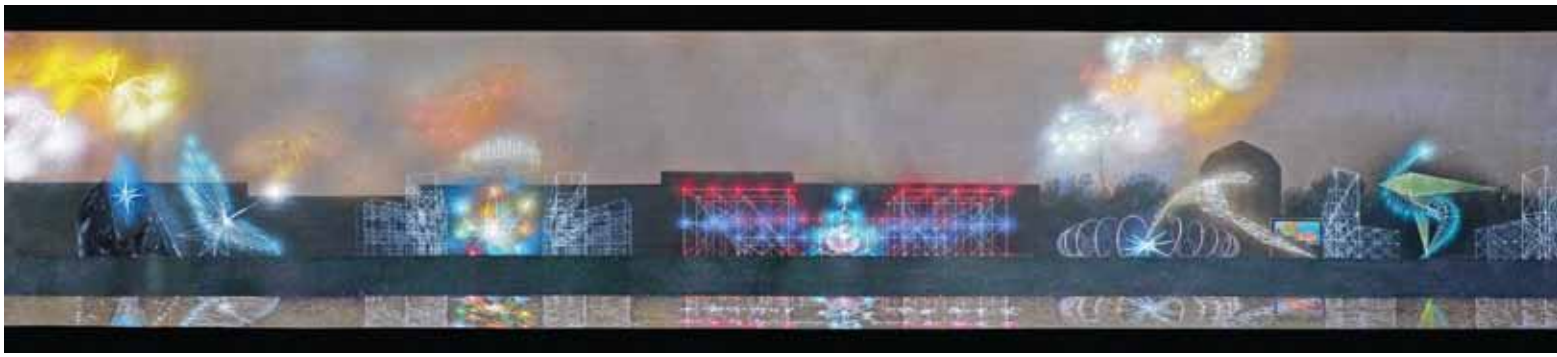
Whilst *Modernisation* focuses on realized projects, we are presented with the breadth of the period's conceptual design upstairs at its sister exhibition *Our Metamorphic Futures: Design, technical aesthetics and experimental architecture in the Soviet Union 1960–1980*. The self-erecting houses, metamorphic cities and designs for kinetic light shows imagine alternative futures underpinned by rapid technological advancement. Characterised by interventions into the greyness of architectural planning, avant-garde re-conceptualisations of space and the emergence of social design and environmentalism, the show presents anxious visions of a communist utopia which are both formed and threatened by the progress of technology.

By staging a show about avant-garde, futurological and experimental projects alongside contemporaneous attempts to modernize through design, the curators have produced the first major exhibition which reveals such a multifaceted, critical and tendentious era of Soviet design. On my visit, I made constant comparisons between exhibits. The growth of free time for leisure pursuits and spiritual and cultural nourishment is expressed






Exhibition *Modernisation. Baltic Art, Architecture, and Design. 1960–70s*
National Art Gallery, Vilnius
9 December 2011–12 February 2012
Curators: Lolita Jablonskienė, Kai Lobjakas and Iliana Veinberga



Lev Nussberg, co-author Galina Bitt. *50 years of Soviet science.* Decoration of the riverside at Leningrad University in honour of the 50th anniversary of the October revolution, 1967

1. Studio Senezh (Mark Konik, Evgeni Rosenblum, with Semjon Bulatov and Yuri Katajev). Interior

2. Studio Senezh (Mark Konik, Evgeni Rosenblum, with Semjon Bulatov and Yuri Katajev). Interior solution for TU-144, 1968. View of model

3. Lev Nussberg, co-author Galina Bitt. Proposal for play centre at the pioneer camp *Eaglet* (Orlyonok). Tuapse, Russia, 1968–1969

Exhibition *Our Metamorphic Futures. Design, technical aesthetics and experimental architecture in the Soviet Union 1960–1980*
9 December 2011–12 February 2012
Curators: Andres Kurg, Mari Laanemets

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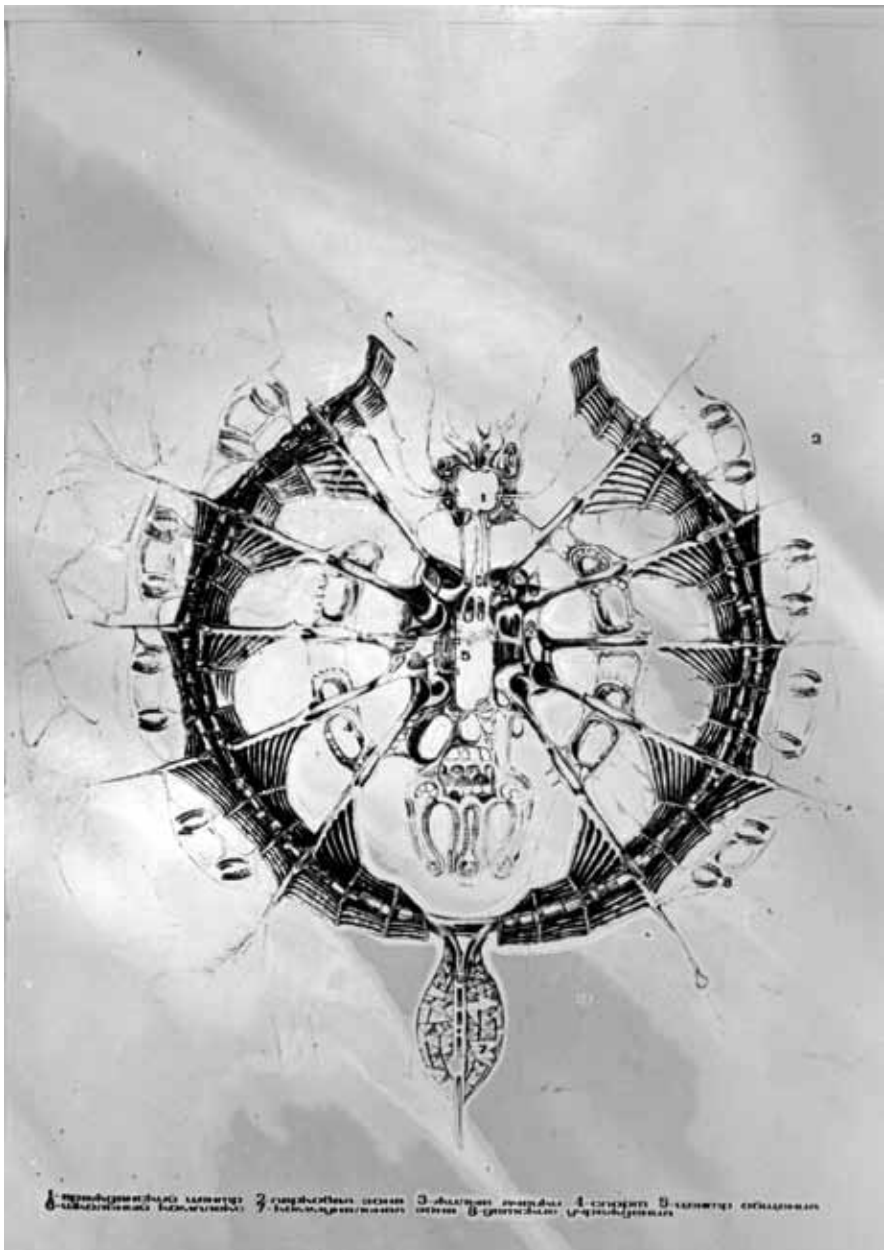


NER (Alexei Gutnov, Ilya Lezhava and others). General plan of the settlement unit NER. Project for the Milan triennale, 1968

architecturally in the designs for cinemas and concert halls in *Modernisation,* whilst upstairs we see how the radical urbanists NER anticipated the materialisation of these ideals in the future landscape of the 'contemplative city'. NER's separation of the city into living, industrial, entertainment and contemplative zones connected by space age transit systems and communication hubs presents a cybernetic vision of the future led by the communications revolution. Likewise, it is not difficult to see how this was inspired by the abundance of telephones, televisions and radios which were newly available to the mass consumer.

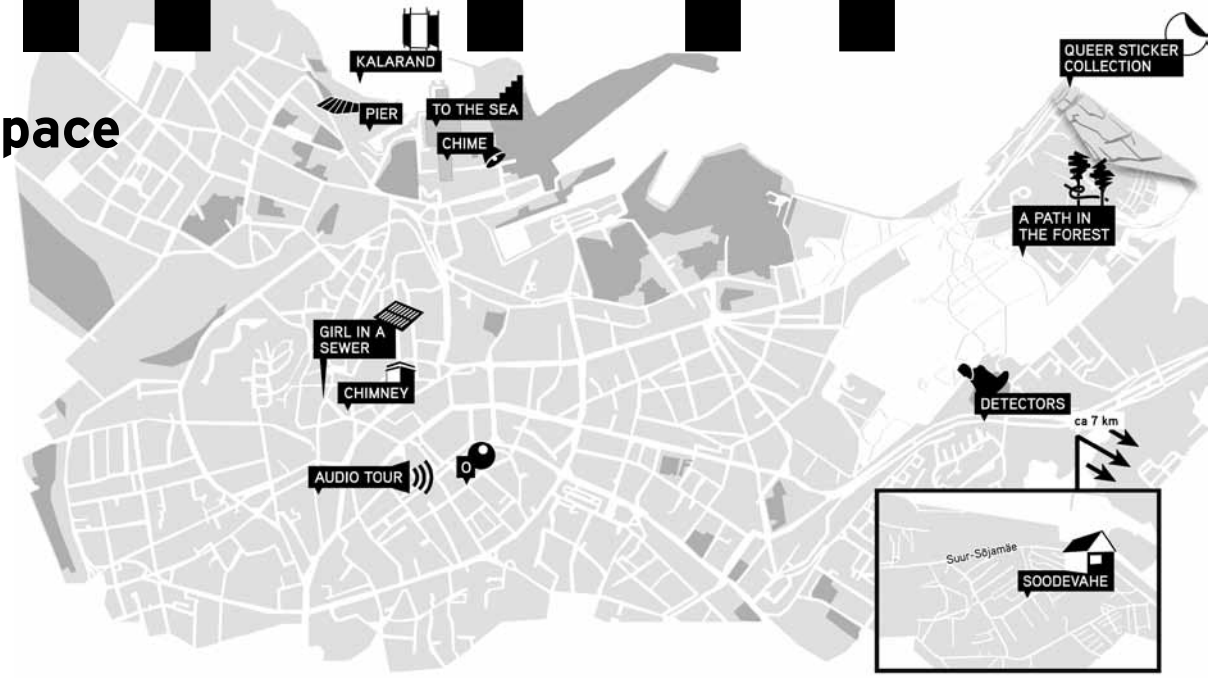
The idea that the process of imagining the future is partly a search for the redemption of the present is strongly felt. The Soviet Union was an avowedly future-oriented society geared towards completing the grand historical project of achieving communism. In the 1960s and 70s this became more pronounced, as design turned away from Stalinist historicism towards the idea that communism could be achieved through the rational application of scientific and technological achievement to industry, which was to provide plenty for all. These exhibitions emphasise what an anxious sort of modernisation took place behind the rhetoric. The industrial design of this period is described in the exhibition text as being overly technocratic and too heavily based on 'objective, science-based utility,' serving the producer rather than the user. Concerns about the fetishisation of scientific rationalism are also expressed in *Our Metamorphic Futures*. The Senezh studio deliberately favoured intuitive methods and artistic processes (even for the design of aircraft interiors) and Alexander Yermolaev pioneered the deliberate use of poor materials; filling the grand interiors of Moscow's Hotel Rossia with cardboard furniture for an international design congress. These actions resonate with the ecologically and socially conscious design which is now part of the mainstream in art schools and technical colleges the world over.

One criticism I am sure *Modernisation* will face is that it doesn't reflect the reality of life during the period (which would be an impossible and pointless task). Modernisation is never a giant leap; the new mingled with the old as televisions sat atop inherited cabinets and multi-storey car parks were erected next to opera houses. In essence, both of these exhibitions are about imagining alternate futures: one which appeared to be imminently accessible but just out of reach, the other a critical reflection of the former, metamorphising around contemporary hopes and anxieties of what the future will bring.

Thomas Cubbin
(1987), is a design historian, and studied at the Royal College of Art, London. He writes about post-war design in the USSR.

LIFT11 – lessons in public space

Epp Lankots



Tallinn is a town like any other: a diverse social and spatial association which allows material and space for different cultural practices, either spontaneous or arranged actions, permanent or momentary layers, soon to vanish from the urban space and consciousness. An effort has been made before to concentrate urban topics in the context of different events, although the issue of the town as a public space that belongs to everybody has not yet found any systematic outlet. In the year of the Capital of Culture, the urban installation festival LIFT11 (curators Margit Aule, Margit Argus, Ingrid Ruudi and Maarin Ektermann) took place from spring to autumn. It was the first undertaking of its kind in the public space in Tallinn, and it encouraged people to think about the many layers of the urban environment and invited them to discover the town and find more ways to use it.

Contemporary urban installations, on the whole, try to sort out problems caused by modernist society and the resulting urban space: the streets were transformed from places of work and leisure into temporary corridors between home and office. Although postmodernist culture has been criticising and easing the problems of controlled space for quite some time, today's society and urban space are not a bit less ideologised. The rationalised and particularised idea of the bourgeois society visible in urban space has simply been replaced by the decisive role of the market. The change occurred after the principle form followed finance and was marked by commercialised and privatised city centres, the culture industry and tourism, gated communities or post-public spaces.[1] Examples of the prevalence of post-public spaces and losing the public space can be seen in Ingrid Ruudi's descriptions of how the curators, in preparation for the competition, had to map the locations for the participants, where public spaces actually were in Tallinn, or in Kadri Klementi's work *Audiotour*, which through simple elements in the streets showed how 'street space is business', or is influenced by the all-embracing 'philosophy of obstruction'.

Since the 1960s, contemporary sculpture and installation have been directly involved in criticising controlled public space and power relations, as well as psycho-geographical definitions. Eleven site-specific or moving installations selected in the LIFT11 competition formed a kind of concentrated lesson on the topic of public space, including direct social criticism and actions that raised issues of space and place perception.

LIFT11 encouraged people to notice 'different' places and avoid 'postcard images'

Audio Tour by Kadri Klementi

and, as a result, most installations were located away from active urban centres and busy locations. The works were meant for the city centre, the Old Town, leafy Kadriorg and high-rise Lasnamäe, but the favourite place was the seaside wasteland area between the City Hall and the Patarei (Battery) Prison. It is quite likely that many inhabitants of Tallinn found their way there for the first time during the Capital of Culture Year events. This area needs to be kept in the public eye because instead of developing the potential of a seaside city cen-

1.

2.

Chimney by Aap Kaur Suvi

O by Aet Ader, Andra Aaloe, Kaarel Künnap, Grete Soosalu and Flo Kasearu

1. *A Path In The Forest* by Tetsuo Kondo Architects

2. *Pier* by Siiri Vallner and Indrek Peil

3. *Detectors* by Raul Kalvo

3.

tre, Tallinn prefers to have apartment buildings and roundabouts, although economic pressure has temporarily turned it into a cultural location. On the other hand, the urban wasteland as a nodal point for events seems like harmless training: the designated use of space for the masses is not disturbed and those who control public space are annoyed from a distance – reality is not being significantly shifted.

At the same time, I do not think that the criticism is quite appropriate in the case of LIFT11, as enough attention was lavished on the seaside area. After all, it was central in the Culture Capital programme, and primarily because of the approach that made it possible to reconsider urban space relations. The coastal 'culture kilometre', starting behind the Culture Cauldron (former power station) and running past old military and industrial objects, is the first 'official' public space in Tallinn based on the backyard idea, thus upsetting the concept of a main street and public space that requires quality background architecture. Instead of admiring the power station's grand façade, pedestrians see its industrial details, and the decorative register of this new street space is made up of side doors, ladders, ramps, chimneys, platforms and hooks. In that context, LIFT11 *lo-fi* projects, such as *Kalarand* (fishing coast), creating a beach on an abandoned strip of coast, *Pier*, i.e seats-platforms on the deformed concrete chunks by the sea, and the 10 000 little bells called *Chime* in the grim tunnel of the City Hall are all perfectly situated in a suitable space and show how the changes are nothing more than a question of (re)thinking, or they are evident in mere ripples caused by tiny movements, and urban space becomes an exciting experience.

Most of the LIFT11 works encouraged people to perceive themselves and the urban space and notice the unnoticeable. We should mention a version of Tetsuo Kondo's famous cloud path *Cloudscapes* in Kadriorg Park, called *A Path in the Forest,* Tomomi Hayashi's installation *To the Sea* on the City Hall roof, *Audio Tour,* which introduced Roosikrantsi Street as a socially determined environment, and the fascinating *O* (authors Aet Ader, Andra Aaloe, Kaarel Künnap, Grete Soosalu and Flo Kasearu), a huge inflatable black ball, which appeared and disappeared unexpectedly in various locations during the summer. It seems however that the favourite in the press and of the inhabitants of Tallinn was Raul Kalvo's *Detectors* – huge crouching figures on the edge of the road towards the Lasnamäe residential district. This classic method of investigating everyday space and culture made people notice the mundane and habitual through alienation.

The LIFT festival actually presented only one serious social-critical action. The *Queer Sticker Collection* (curators Anna-Stina Treumund and Jaanus Samma), which labelled the town, was in a clear position, but was not much noticed. For me, the action organised by Timo Toots, involving the Soodevahe district of allotments that had sprung up near the airport, had an undertone of benevolent colonialism that inevitably accompanies such undertakings. However, a work that was not at first realised interfered most successfully in urban life: *Chimney*, a temporary installation. This was supposed to surround the 'bold and beautiful' sculpture of a chimney sweep, which appeared in the Old Town as a result of the relations between politicians and their funders. The installation, which was banned by the author of the sculpture, Tauno Kangro, naturally became a symbol and was secretly realised early one morning by a group of activists. The advantage of *Chimney* was its clear concept, which instead of adding something to the town tried to make the urban space and its political shaping visible by temporarily taking something away from the town.

LIFT11 was the first serious attempt to point out the urban space and public sphere, or the lack of it, in Tallinn. It is impossible to say whether it succeeded or not, or at least this cannot really be measured. Still, LIFT11 did not aspire to solve real situations, but to encourage people to think about the town, and I am certain that there are now more inhabitants of Tallinn who do just that.

See more at www.lift11.ee

1 Nan Ellin. Shelter from the Storm or Form Follows Fear and Vice Versa. – Architecture of Fear. Nan Ellin (Ed). New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997.

Epp Lankots
(1976), is an architectural historian and works at the Estonian Academy of Arts as a researcher. She has published articles about 20th century and especially Soviet-era architecture. Her current focus is on the history of art and architecture and methodologies. She is also writing her PhD thesis on the historiography of modern Estonian architecture.

Kalarand, the sea and the public interest

Conversation with the architect Toomas Paaver

Kalarand

Liina Siib (LS): You and I first came to Kalarand (a coastal area in Tallinn, literally 'fishing beach', close to the old town) in 2005, during the Trichtlinnburg project, when you organised a walk around Kalamaja along the railway. Together with Teele Pehk and Triin Talk, you produced an installation here during the 2011 Capital of Culture programme.
Toomas Paaver (TP): Indeed, this place offers wonderful opportunities.

LS: If you remember, in 2005 we admired and picked up pebbles there, the result of industrial construction. The sea had smoothed and cast the stones to the shore.
TP: It's the same place and similar lovely pebbles can still be picked up there. The railway has been replaced by the Culture Kilometre. Some people, of course, regard it as nothing more than a dusty road, but it has definitely opened up the seaside area and encourages people to come here.

LS: Don't you feel that when the railway rails were removed, something essentially characteristic of the Kalamaja residential area disappeared?
TP: I do, a bit, but it was really difficult to walk along the railway. It would have been best if the Culture Kilometre project could have somehow creatively used the rails as well. However, the track itself and the atmosphere have survived and the design tries to stress that. Unfortunately, the city officials consider the Kilometre only temporary. They want a road for cars instead. A small road is probably necessary, but this could run along the Kilometre, zigzag, if necessary, which looks friendlier anyway.

LS: What was the access to the sea like in 19th century Tallinn? People walked from Old Town along Pikk Street – and then what?
TP: The 19th century coastline was where the Culture Kilometre is now. Pikk Street smoothly led to Suur-Patarei Street. This connection is currently broken by a confusing traffic juncture. Kalarand has been down here since ancient times; old photographs show numerous boats. Some pictures also depict bathing houses. The closure of the area was a Soviet phenomenon. Reopening the town to the sea should mean that everybody can go to Kalarand, to swim and take boats out.

LS: The detail plans, however, allow the developer to build many closely placed buildings in the area near the water, and even take more land from the sea. The shore will once again be cut off.
TP: The most unpleasant part of the new planning is the filling of the shore with soil, making it straight as a ruler, and pushing it towards the sea. It will give more land to the

developer. In my opinion, it is idiotic and a waste of money to build a promenade into the sea and just give away the seashore, especially as we essentially already have a cosy promenade. The plans were produced during the boom craze, along with an endless bureaucratic procedure, and nobody seems to know how to turn it all back. The Tallinn City Planning Department wants to proceed with the same plan. Those who decide, and even the developers, seem to realise that it is hopelessly misguided, but they are unable to do anything about it, at least for now.

LS: Pro Kapital's development plan smells of gated communities. The inhabitants of the planned new urban area will have much better access to the sea than others.
TP: This planning indeed looks like that, where a gated community could reach the sea. The harbour in the plan looks suspicious too, as if only the boats of that community would land there. Other townspeople would have to stay away. The harbour is, in fact, not necessary at all and even the developer is not that interested. So it appears that the situation is even worse: abandoning the harbour means that the present Kalarand will survive, but will then find itself in the middle of a residential plot of 400 flats. The roads and the plots seem to be intentionally placed in a way that makes public access very difficult.

LS: How are Tallinn's seaside areas actually developed? What happens when one part belongs to the state, another part to the town and a third part is privately owned? Does the state have a say at all? Or is it mainly Tallinn that makes the decisions?
TP: The town's will has been weak. The state, on the whole, has the state's interests at heart, for example the mining harbour for the navy. Or tries to sell something. The land under the streets still largely belongs to the state, but it is gradually being given to the town, gratis. If Tallinn wants to be a serious maritime town, the centre should definitely have a seaside park, but there is no land for that. The surroundings of Kalarand would be ideal, but through the land reform it all went into private ownership. The chances that the town will buy

The Culture Kilometre

Beach furniture for the *Kalarand*

Kalarand, a *LIFT11* project by Teele Pehk, Triin Talk and Toomas Paaver. Beach party on 12 June 2011

it back seem utopian. A few dozen metres of seaside for the promenade probably means a deal with the owner, who is then allowed to build his development nearby. At the moment, there is not even a desire to proceed.

LS: The state and the town do not often cooperate?
TP: Do they both feel that they have the duty to look after people's need for space and create diverse public space? Perhaps they occasionally do, although they seem to focus on the popular idea of how to raise money from space.

LS: What about involving the community? They use this space.
TP: If you expressed the idea in any city office that we could develop public space on this plot of land, the typical reply would be: who is going to build it, who can afford it, and who will keep it tidy? No, no, better sell it to someone. Less bother all around. This is the usual attitude. The town architect, for example, cannot do anything he wants either, because he does not control the purse strings. Kalarand is a bit different, because excellent space already exists here; it simply must be protected and everything is in fact fine without spending any money. Protection and development of public space should be the joint aim of both the state and the town.

LS: Considering Kalarand, which is a matter between the town and the developers, can't the state interfere at all?
TP: The state, i.e. the Harju County governor, can supervise the planning. The governor represents the state. This is an opportunity for the state, although in most cases the verdict of the supervisors is that all is correct legally. In the case of Kalarand, we should keep in mind that the development wants to go straight into the sea, but the sea belongs to the state. In that sense, the state is an owner.

But, again, who, which department, deals with this?

LS: What government department actually owns the sea in the Republic of Estonia?
TP: The sea is an exceptional case; it cannot be registered or divided into plots. The sea and bigger lakes are luckily parts of our country that cannot really be bought or sold. Every other public space is not protected by law, so a stupid city government can, in fact, sell off the entire street network. This cannot happen with the sea, although there are exceptions here too. The owner of a seaside plot of land can apply to expand the land at the expense of the sea. Here the decisions are made by the Technical Surveillance Authority. As far as I know, the topic of cosy public spaces is not included in decision-making. We desperately need an office or something, in both the town and the state structure, that could systematically deal with questions of public space.

LS: Of all the seaside area, Tallinn only owns the City Hall, the territory for the new Town Hall and the Culture Cauldron. Is the rest of the seaside territory under private ownership?
TP: This happened in the course of our land reform and for other reasons. We all live in the world of private ownership, but this means that we have to set restrictions on private owners. Ideally, the seaside area of historical Kalamaja, the railway and the Culture Kilometre should be a wide area with public buildings, such as the City Hall, Patarei (Battery) Prison, and the seaplane hangars – this is a totally different space. It could be very pretty if the buildings were close to the sea, but Kalarand is not the place.

LS: Last summer, you tried to develop a 'self-emerging beach' in Kalarand. Nobody from 'higher up' offered this beach to the people of Kalamaja; people just occupied the empty area for their own beach. Just like the Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia CAME, which a few years ago established a museum and an exhibition space in an abandoned house.
TP: We did initially have this plan to emphasise the beach potential of this area, until it was taken for granted. Pro Kapital did not ban it, although the land belongs to them. They could not, in fact, have banned it, because the beach was taken over by people a long time ago and is located on a legally open shore path. People have squatted in state-owned abandoned houses before, and brought them to life. It is wonderful that the old power plant is now the Culture Cauldron and the The Museum of Contemporary Art of Estonia is taken seriously. If only the decision-makers would start thinking, the same would happen in Kalarand. In ten years time, nobody will understand why the planning being pushed ahead now was allowed in the first place. On 12 June 2011 we threw a party on Kalarand – people who had never been there before could not believe that such a place existed, and could not believe that there was a plan to destroy it.

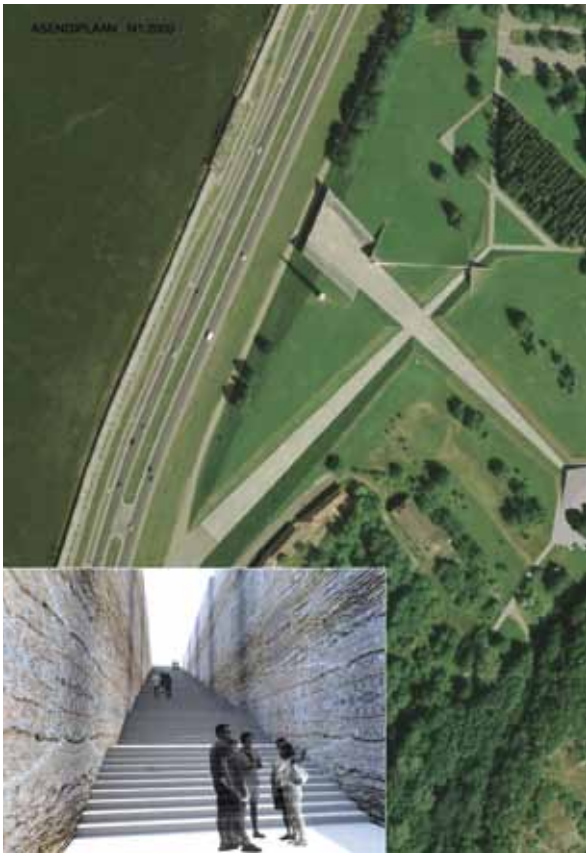
LS: How many people did you have at the party?
TP: A few hundred. It will be clear this spring whether the beach undertakings can become a tradition. The Telliskivi Society is already hatching a plot to restore the wooden sunbathing platforms which have vanished from the beach, and also to organise refuse collection in summer. The cabin for changing clothes is there. It is orange and can be seen from afar. A bench seems to be still there too. You can see them from the boat coming from Helsinki, two sparkling objects.

LS: Is the water clean at Kalarand?
TP: Tests say that there are no dangerous bacteria. There is a water purification plant on Paljassaare Peninsula, and refuse is no longer dumped into the sea. The industrial waste at the bottom of the sea (concrete, bricks, asphalt and glass) has been smoothed by the sea, hence the colourful pebbles on the shore. The water gets deep very quickly and the water exchange is good. Nobody has been harmed by the water in any way.

LS: To what extent do the people living in the area and using the space have a say in the development of this place?
TP: This right must be claimed, on the people's own initiative. Squatting is one means. After all, the current owners sort of squatted on this beach, shrewdly privatising it during the land reform. Both sides now regard the beach as their own and so there is fierce fighting about the planning. The planning should not lean too strongly towards one side, but should be something of a social agreement.

Toomas Paaver
(1976), MA at the Estonian Academy of Arts in architecture and urban planning. Between 2003 and 2007 he worked as Kuressaare town architect, in 2009–2010 as an adviser in the planning department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, then at his own enterprises *Linnalahendused* (Urban Solutions) and *Paik Architects*. Since 2010 has been dealing with associating civil society and urban planning, mainly through the Telliskivi Society. See more at www.paik.ee

Competition entry *PADAKONN*
by Vadim Fomitsev,
Mart Liho and Ekke Väli.
Special prize



Competition entry
MÄLUTULBAD by Koit Ojaliiv.
1st and 2nd prize

The (un)compromising nature of politics and art, or aestheticised human suffering

Piret Lindpere

The competition for the memorial to the victims of communism is yet another stage in the post-communist rehabilitation process. Estonian society has been active in this area for about twenty years (the prefix 'post' marks a situation where communism belongs to the past, but its shadow is still clearly visible in the present, in memories and habits, and in the environment and political life). Monumental art, which makes it possible to translate meanings, pain, anxiety and suffering into the language of art and architecture, is certainly one of the favourite fields of national self-purging.

There are not too many memorials to the victims of communism in the world. The best known of them is the smallish monument in Washington (2007) – free of artistic ambitions, pregnant with meaning and frequently copied. This monument commemorates people who suffered under the Pol Pot regime, as well as those deported to prison camps from the Baltic countries. Another well-known memorial is in Prague (2002), where the victims of communism are depicted as human figures reduced to zombie-like caricatures.

Estonian society has already become rather allergic to monuments with political undertones, especially after the utilitarian glass obelisk with a cross, the Victory monument, which cost 3.5 million euros, was put up on the main square of the capital city in 2009, much against the wishes of the artistic community.

This was not because the topic itself is unimportant and painless. It is instead too difficult to grasp, and the term 'victims of communism' was, after all, imported from the Western countries. Estonians were victims of Stalinism, i.e. the deported, forest brothers, imprisoned, murdered, fighters and forced exiles, and they are commemorated all over Estonia; each settlement has its own story. The term 'victims of communism' raises questions of who exactly these victims are and whether the distance from the communist past is great enough in the Estonian context, in which the current prime minister and a number of other leading public figures are former communists. Do we have any right and reason to politicise mourning and pain? Why create tensions, instead of trying to get rid of them?

When, in spring 2011, the discussions of the government plan of action reached the memorial to the victims of communism, the representatives of the ministries looked at one another helplessly: who should arrange this and why? The Ministry of Defence, the 'author' of the failed glass monument, had no wish to fall on its face again. The brand new Minister of Culture, however, decided to tackle this himself. He was obviously urged on by a desire to prove himself and a genuine passion for various ideological attributes and symbols, whether holocaust or Nazism, and why not communism as well.

It was likely that things would happen as they did in the case of the freedom monument: all attempts to record this abstract ideal would be fruitless. It seems as if the concept of freedom is just too big and too sacred for Estonian monumental art.

The competition was organised hastily, but offered many surprises. Perhaps partly because, during the preparation stage, all organisations representing freedom fighters, the deported and the persecuted were ignored. The competition therefore became something like a cool task for art students. Young architects and artists boldly faced the challenge of grasping the ungraspable.

One competition entry explained quite simply: "the monumental form will always be a fascinating genre, but thinking about yet another ideological monument makes people feel sick." Most of the 66 entries chose a sensitively spectacular, depoliticised approach and focused on elegant iconography. Conceptual games were encouraged by the competition conditions, as the task was broad-based and formulated quite loosely on purpose, including the location and cost of the memorial; the contextual and formal interpretation was also not determined and left entirely up to the participants. As there were no restricting factors, fantasy could soar freely.

An expressive and complex-free approach, and aspiring to produce an effect, impression and image formed the centre of most entries. The jury cast aside uncomfortable 'serious' solutions. As the aim was not in fact to establish a real winning project, the jury focused on originality, scale and contemporary trends, and enjoyed everything with just as much liberal-mindedness and youthful spirit as the participants.

Perhaps for that reason, i.e. being too 'ordinary', one of the most impressive projects lacked reckognition: a totally new urban square was created outside the town wall, in the abandoned area between the sea and the Old Town. Its originality was mainly in the sharp light projected from behind, which cast strong shadows. The shadows of people walking on the square blended with hundreds of figures in the pavement: the square was full of shadows ... without people.

The effective manifestation of the sense(lessness) of the competition was Ekke Väli's (one of the few middle-aged participants) work, where a fibreglass copy of a Stalin monument that once stood in Tallinn was put on a pedestal upside down.

Most projects presented various abstract images, all sorts of symbols, where the idea and link with victims of communism, i.e. the context, were not revealed. These could be monuments to whatever. For example, there was the entry that received one of the main awards, which suggested renovating the only existing memorial in Tallinn: the Maarjamäe compact ensemble planned in the 1960s–1980s and never quite finished (Koit Ojaliiv). An additional value here was the grand six-metre wide staircase cut into the klint (this would probably act as a viewing platform, as for construction reasons it leads nowhere). The crumbling and useless, still-standing abstract complex with modern influences is historically interesting for many reasons. One is that both German soldiers and Red Army fighters were buried there, and were then dug up again, depending on which power happened to reign at the moment. According to more emphatic philosophies, they are all victims of communism, and why

Competition entry *VEST* by Armin Valter and Joel Kopli. 1st and 2nd prize

not be practical and simply attach another meaning to the existing monument?

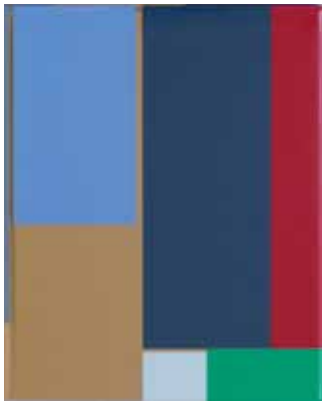
As landscape is always potentially more powerful in organising space than is an artwork, many works were set in landscape for conceptual reasons. Manipulating nature, emotions, history and the politics of the moment, and the aspiring for existential or spiritual depth occasionally seemed pretended, although purity, minimalism and the abstract made the competition as a whole a conscious, finely aesthetic act. Relying on the view that the meaning of communism is most lucidly crystallised in Soviet military bases, one competition idea was to clear all former military bases in Estonia (altogether about 87 000 ha) of undergrowth and keep them tidy in the future ("Mowing turns wild nature into cultural landscape and military bases into memorials", according to the author Alvin Järving).

A land-art entry by Armin Valter and Joel Kopli provoked unanimous enthusiasm. It had an excellent location, cleverly linked with a powerful metaphysical experience of space and nature.

Paldiski, a closed garrison town, which the Soviet army left only in 1994, was certainly a symbolic location. Alas, what was called in the project 'a pure geometrical form' in the wasteland of the former military campus seems to some more like a 'hybrid of a silage hole and sewer treatment plant' (an Internet comment), especially as the authors suggested using old silicate bricks from the demolished collective farm buildings as material. Besides, 'solemn and awesome' can in practice be simply appalling, because a 20-metre deep, open cylinder in a place where people hardly ever go, and in which criminal elements are not far away, can spring unpleasant surprises.

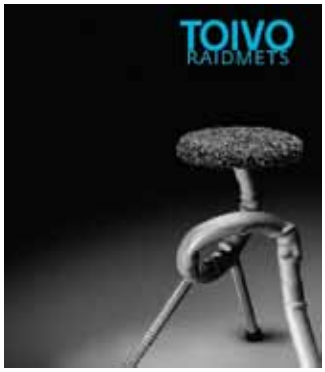
There are vague plans to unveil a memorial to the victims of communism on the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia in 2018 (this jubilee promises bigger subsidies from the state). However, the most significant outcome of the competition is probably its lesson for politicians and ministries. We can be almost entirely certain that the head of government, along with the leading politicians who looked through the projects, failed to understand this lesson. This, in fact, serves them right for producing the Victory column of the War of Independence.

Piret Lindpere (1963), graduated as an art historian from the University of Tartu. has worked mainly in art and architecture as a manager, in the Union of Estonian Architects, Centre of Contemporary Art in Estonia, Ministry of Culture and from 2011 at the Kumu Art Museum. Her main research field is Estonian 20th century architecture. As a deputy chancellor at the Ministry of Culture, she participated in compiling the government's plan of action and the competition conditions for the memorial to the victims of communism.



Kaido Ole 2007–2012
Compiled by
Maria-Kristiina Soomre
and Kaido Ole
Design by Indrek Sirkel
In Estonian and English
264 pages
Published by Temnikova &
Kasela Gallery, 2012

The book gives a solid overview of artworks by Kaido Ole from the last five years. The texts are chosen from his emails and conversations during the last couple of years, ranging from making art to buying new clothes and taking care of a car.



Toivo Raidmets
Compiled by
Toivo Raidmets
Edited by Leele Välja
Design and layout by
Tiit Jürna
in Estonian and English
112 pages
Published by the Estonian
Academy of Arts, 2011

Interior architect Toivo Raidmets launched his career in the mid-1980s with naughty pieces of furniture, which in the next decades were complemented by more sober, even minimalist, industrially produced, items. This volume presents his work as an artist, furniture designer and interior architect, covering more than three decades. Krista Kodres contributed an essay *Provocative Aesthetics of Toivo Raidmets*, reprinted are Sirje Helme's *Between Baroque and Dada* (1991) and Mart Kalm's *A Rowdy Snob* (1990). In addition, the book includes two interviews with Toivo Raidmets by Mart Kalm (1990 and 2010).

Orthodox Churches, Convents and Chapels in Estonia
Authors: Jaanus Plaat,
Arne Maasik
Design and layout by
Martin Pedanik
In Estonian, English and
Russian
1008 pages
Published by the Estonian
Academy of Arts, 2011

The photo album includes all the Orthodox churches, chapels and convents in Estonia, as well as all the ruins of sacral buildings known to the authors. The book starts with a historical overview of orthodoxy in Estonia from the 11th century to the 21st century and then focuses on the distinctive architectural features, building processes and the history of congregations of the 178 Orthodox sacral buildings situated in the present-day Estonian territory. The texts are written by Jaanus Plaat, Professor of Folk Art and Cultural Anthropology of the Estonian Academy of Arts. The author of the photos (from 2007–2011) is Arne Maasik, an architecture photographer.

Beach Town, Mushroom Balcony and Vodka Cabinet: Pärnu City Architect Olev Siinmaa
Author: Mart Kalm
Design and layout by
Aleksandr Zverev and
Emil Urbel
In Estonian and English
300 pages
Published by the
Estonian Academy of
Arts, 2012

Pärnu city architect Olev Siinmaa (1881–1948) was one of the most distinguished Estonian Functionalists of the 1930s. Both his white villas and Pärnu's beach architecture became the symbols of the pre-war modernity. But in addition to the bright beach developments the responsibilities of the city architect also entailed the more mundane task of designing municipal building projects. Siinmaa was already a successful cabinetmaker, whose achievements included art nouveau furniture for the Pärnu City Hall, when he decided to study architecture in Germany; thus furniture design remained an important occupation throughout his life. Siinmaa was one of the chief designers of the state furniture of nationalist style for President Päts. He furnished Estonian rooms in both the presidential residence in the Kadriorg Palace and in the villa of Oru, the President's summer residence. This volume is richly illustrated with old and contemporary photos, as well as original drawings. The catalogue accompanied the exhibition of the same name that was displayed in Pärnu Museum and in the Museum of Estonian Architecture in Tallinn.

Kumu Art Museum

Weizenbergi 34 / Valge 1, Tallinn
www.ekm.ee/eng/kumu.php
Open: May–Sept Tue–Sun 11 am–6 pm, Wed 11 am–8 pm;
Oct–April Wed–Sun 11 am–6 pm, Wed 11 am–8 pm

until 13 May	*SPATIUM.* Danish Contemporary Art
until 12 Aug	*Undiscovered Masterpieces*. Russian Art from the Collections of the Baltic Countries
until 21 Oct	*The Black Horse and Other Drawings*. Jüri Kaarma.
4 May–26 Aug	*With the Eye of a Romantic*. 19th Century Dutch and Belgian Painting from the Rademakers Collection
18 May–9 Sep	*Tõnis Vint and His Aesthetic Universe*
8 June–30 Sep	*Speed of Darkness and Other Stories*
31 Aug– 2013	*Geometrical Man.* The Group of Estonian Artists and Art Innovation between 1920 and 1930
14 Sep–2013	*Fashion and the Cold War*
28 Sep–2013	*IRWIN. Construction of the Context*
19 Oct–2013	*Archaeology and the Future of Estonian Art Scenes*
24 Oct–2013	*Colour in Estonian Graphic Art.* Avo Keerend and Evi Tihemets

Kadriorg Art Museum

Kadriorg Palace, Weizenbergi 37, Tallinn
Mikkel Museum, Weizenbergi 28, Tallinn
www.ekm.ee/eng/kadriorg.php
Open: May–Sept Tue–Sun 10 am–5 pm
Oct–April Wed–Sun 10 am–5 pm

Permanent exhibitions:

Kadriorg Palace: Paintings from the 16th–18th century. Dutch, German, Italian and Russian masters. Western European and Russian applied art and sculpture from the 18th–20th centuries.

until 24 June	*Undiscovered Masterpieces.* Russian Art from the Collections of the Baltic Countries

NB! From 1 July until the end of 2012 the Kadriorg Art Museum (Kadriorg Palace) is closed for renovation.

Mikkel Museum: Collection of Johannes Mikkel: the Art of Western Europe, Russia, and China from 16th–20th centuries

until 13 May	*Limelight.* Theatre and Theatricality in Art
26 May–25 Nov	*Time of Clocks.* Historical Clocks from Private Collections

Adamson-Eric Museum

Lühike jalg 3, Tallinn
www.ekm.ee/eng/adamson.php
Open: Wed–Sun 11 am–6 pm

Permanent exhibition
Works by Adamson-Eric. Adamson-Eric (1902–1968) is one of the most outstanding Estonian artists of the 20th century. The museum's permanent exhibition consists of a display of Adamson-Eric's works (painting, ceramics, porcelain painting, leather art, metal forms, jewellery, decorative tiles, textile, and furniture).

until 5 Aug	Dora Gordine. Sculptor, Artist, Designer
18 Aug–4 Nov	*Reflections of the Self in Time.* Adamson-Eric and His Contemporaries.

Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design

Lai 17, Tallinn
www.etdm.ee
Open: Wed–Sun 11 am–6 pm

Permanent exhibition: *Patterns of Time 3*. Survey of Estonian applied art and the development of design

until 28 May	*Getting faster and faster?* Glass artist Rait Prääts
1 June–22 July	*Time and Nature.* The ceramic art of Alfredo Gioventù (Italy)
until 17 June	Kärt Ojavee
until 17 June	Works by Estonia's younger generation of independent graphic artists (2001–2011)
30 June–2 Sep	*Our metamorphous future.* Design, technical aesthetics and experimental architecture in the Soviet Union, 1960–1980
30 June–4 Nov	*Modernization.* Baltic art, architecture and design in the 1960s and 1970s
28 July–23 Sep	*MARGINALIA.* Minibooks
15 Sep–4 Nov	*Classics.* Rein Mets
29 Sep–4 Nov	Early applied glass art. *Bright radiance of grey years: The Tarbeklaas trademark 1940–60*

The Museum of Contemporary Art of Estonia

Põhja pst 35, Tallinn
www.ekkm.ee
Open from April–October
Tue–Sun 1 pm–7 pm

28 April–10 June	*Köler Prize 2012.* Exhibition of Nominees
17 June–15 July	*Istvan Kantor Monty Cantsin? Amen! The Insurgent Neoist*
22 July–26 Aug	*GRRRLS POWERS*
2 Sep–7 Oct	Exhibition by surprise curator
10 Oct–20 Oct	Artishok Biennial

Tallinn Art Hall

Vabaduse Sq 8, Tallinn
www.kunstihoone.ee
Open: Wed–Sun 12 am–6 pm

22 April–3 June	*Exotics*
9 June–22 July	Glass exhibition
28 July–9 Sep	*Silent Revolution*
15 Sep–28 Oct	Jüri Ojaver

Tallinn Art Hall Gallery

Vabaduse Sq 6, Tallinn
www.kunstihoone.ee
Open: Wed–Sun 12 am–6 pm

13 April–6 May	*Nautilus Pompilius.* Jaanus Orgusaar
11 May–3 June	Cyprien Gaillard
8 June–1 July	Tiiu Kirsipuu and Maarja Undusk
6 July–22 July	Veiko Klemmer
27 July–19 Aug	Evi Tihemets
31 Aug–30 Sep	*Re. Act*
5 Oct–28 Oct	Tanja Muravskaja and Marina Napruškina

Niguliste Museum

Niguliste 3, Tallinn
www.ekm.ee/eng/niguliste.php
Open: Wed–Sun 10 am–5 pm

Permanent exhibitions:
Ecclesiastical Art from the 14th–20th centuries The Silver Chamber

2 Nov–2 Sep 2013 *Ars moriend i – the Art of Dying*

Tallinn City Gallery

Harju 13, Tallinn
www.kunstihoone.ee
Open: Wed–Sun 12 am–6 pm

3 May–13 May	Young photo artist
17 May–10 June	Tiina Tammetalu
14 June–8 July	Mai Sööt
12 July–5 Aug	Sandra Jõgeva
9 Aug–2 Sep	Eva Sepping
6 Sep–30 Sep	Mare Vint
4 Oct–28 Oct	Leonhard Lapin

Hobusepea Gallery

Hobusepea 2, Tallinn
www.eaa.ee/hobusepea/english/
Open: Wed–Mon 10 am–6 pm

25 April–7 May	*On Bureaucracy.* Alver Linnamägi
9 May–21 May	Kristiina Hansen & Johannes Säre
23 May–4 June	Reimo Võsa-Tangsoo & Co
6 June–18 June	Soho Fond
20 June–2 July	Aili Vahtrapuu
4 July–16 July	Carmen Lansberg
18 July–30 July	Mall Paris
1 Aug–13 Aug	Andres Koort
15 Aug–27 Aug	Tallinn Drawing Triennial
29 Aug–10 Sep	Paul Kuimet
12 Sep–24 Sep	*The Thief of Bagdad and other illusionists.* Paul Rodgers
26 Sep–8 Oct	*Absurd.* Veiko Klemmer

Draakon Gallery

Pikk 18, Tallinn
www.eaa.ee/draakon/eindex.htm
Open: Mon–Fri 10 am–6 pm, Sat 10 am–5 pm

23 April–5 May	Villu Plink & Silja Saarepuu
17 May–19 May	*2150. Portraits.* Holger Loodus
21 May–9 June	August Künnapu
11 June–22 June	Architecture Department
25 June–7 July	Anne Parmasto
9 July–21 July	Peeter Allik
23 July–4 Aug	Valeri Vinogradov
6 Aug–18 Aug	Tallinn Drawing Triennial
21 Aug–8 Sep	Mihkel Maripuu
10 Sep–22 Sep	Vano Allsalu
24 Sep–6 Oct	Sirja-Liis Eelma

Vaal Gallery

Tartu mnt 80d, Tallinn
www.vaal.ee
Open: Tue–Fri 12 am–6 pm, Sat 12 am–4 pm

May	Björn Koop
June	MKL
August	Nadežda Tšernobai
September	Miljard Kilk
October	Endel Kõks 100

HOP Gallery

Hobusepea 2, Tallinn
www.eaa.ee/hop
Open: Thu–Tue 10 am–6 pm

19 April–8 May	Estonian Academy of Arts. Glass Department
10 May–29 May	Jorge Manilla (Mexico, Belgium)
31 May–5 June	Kairit Annus
14 June–26 June	Mari Liis Tammi
28 June–17 July	Kärt Seppel, Ülle Rajasalu, Annika Teder
19 July–7 Aug	Eve Koha
9 Aug–28 Aug	Ingrid Allik
30 Aug–18 Sep	Villu Plink
20 Sep–9 Oct	Ulvi Haagensen

Tartu Art Museum

Raekoja Sq 18, Tartu
www.tartmus.ee
Open: Wed–Sun 11 am–6 pm

until 3 June	*Big Vase*
6 June–1 July	Graduates from Tartu University Painting Department
6 July–26 Aug	*Luxe, Calme et Volupté.* Bathers in Estonian Art 1920–1945
7 Sep–18 Nov	*ART IST KUKU NU UT.* Contemporary art festival
14 Sep–4 Nov	*Three Lectures of Painting.* J. Gasiunas (Lithuania), P. Lubowski (Poland), K. Ole (Estonia)

Tartu Art House

Vanemuise 26, Tallinn
www.kunstimaja.ee
Open: Wed–Mon 21 am–6 pm

11 May–3 June	*Man, Sexuality, Art*
4 June–1 July	Students from Tartu University Painting Department
2 July–29 July	Peeter Laurits
30 July–26 Aug	Raivo Kelomees
27 Aug–23 Sep	*ART IST KUKU NU UT.* Contemporary art festival
24 Sep–21 Oct	Ilmar Kruusamäe

in small hall

11 May–3 June	Liisa Kruusmägi
4 June–1 July	*Puudersell 90.* Memorial exhibition
2 July–29 July	Meta Narusberk
30 July–26 Aug	Nadežda Tšernobai
27 Aug–23 Sep	*ART IST KUKU NU UT.* Contemporary art festival
24 Sep–21 Oct	Maris Tuuling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